

CITY OF MORAINE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Purpose: The City is committed to enhancing traditional communication methods using Social Media. The City recognizes and encourages innovative ways to use these technology tools to communicate with the public, expand public access to information, and enhance its services. This Policy establishes the City’s position on the utilization and management of social media accounts and provides guidance on the management, administration and oversight of official City social media accounts, as well as employees’ personal social media accounts. The principals of this Policy shall apply to new and emerging methods of social media even if not expressly discussed herein.

Other laws, ordinances, and policies may also apply to the use of social media and this Social Media Policy should not be interpreted to conflict with any such laws, ordinances, and policies. This Policy does not restrict actions or activities protected under Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act or any other federal or state law or regulation.

It is not the City’s intent to create a public forum, but to use social media to post and distribute information to the public. Comments from third parties must directly relate to topics posted by the City, with language that is appropriate for everyone (including minors).

Scope: This Social Media Policy applies to all City officers and employees when working with social media tools on behalf of the City, and applies to an officer’s and employee’s use of personal social media sites as addressed in this Policy.

The City shall implement this Social Media Policy, and broadly disseminate the Policy to inform employees and officers of these guidelines for creating, using and maintaining social media resources subject to this Policy and to ensure all employees and officers confirm they are aware of and understand this Policy.

Goals and Objectives:

- 1) To effectively reach the public with important City-related information;
- 2) To increase public access to information; and
- 3) To prevent the misuse of social media by employees, officers, and the public as it relates to the City.

Definitions:

- 1) Blog: A self-published diary or commentary on a particular topic which may allow visitors to post responses, reactions or comments. The term is short for “web log”.
- 2) City: Means the City of Moraine, Ohio.
- 3) Content: Posts, writings, materials, documents, photographs, graphics, or other information which is created, posted, shared, or distributed via social media.
- 4) Employee: All City representatives and anyone employed by the City. The term “Employee” includes Officers unless specifically omitted in the text or the context requires their exclusion.
- 5) Officers: All City elected and appointed officials.

- 6) Official City Social Media Account (City Social Media Account): Any social media account established and managed by the City for the dissemination of information related to its official duties and business.
- 7) Page: The location where content is displayed on a social media site, and is managed by an individual or individuals with administrator rights.
- 8) Post: Content an individual shares on a social media site or the act of publishing content on a site.
- 9) Profile: Information that a user provides about himself/herself on a social media site.
- 10) Social Media Account: Any Internet-based resource which integrates user-generated content and user participation. This includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn), microblogging sites (Twitter), photo and video sharing sites (Flickr, YouTube), wikis (Wikipedia), blogs, and news sites (Digg, Reddit).

A. Official City Social Media Accounts:

Publishing and Access:

- 1) To ensure that City social media accounts are implemented consistently and effectively, only those individual(s) designated as a “social media administrator” by the City Manager will maintain the official City social media accounts. Only those persons designated as a “social media administrator” will have posting privileges on official City social media accounts.
- 2) The social media administrator(s) shall, at all times, identify and conduct themselves as representatives of the City and adhere to all City standards of conduct and observe conventionally accepted protocols and proper decorum. Social media administrator(s) shall coordinate postings to ensure content is posted in a relevant, accurate, and timely manner.
- 3) Social media administrator(s) may publish information to an official City social media account to the extent authorized to do so by the City Manager.
- 4) The City Manager shall have the discretion to temporarily or permanently disable or terminate a City social media account or to change or close a City social media account at any time, without notice, to the extent possible without violating the City Record Retention Schedules or the Ohio Public Records Act.

Accountability:

- 1) Perceived or actual misuse of a social media account by an employee shall be reported directly to the social media administrator(s).
- 2) Perceived or actual misuse of a social media account by a social media administrator(s) shall be reported directly to the City Manager.

Security and Monitoring:

- 1) Passwords and other Sensitive information regarding access to an official City social media account shall be maintained and updated by the social media administrator(s) and provided to the City Manager and Director of Information Technology when requested.
- 2) The social media administrator(s) shall review the City’s social media accounts and keep them updated on an as needed basis.

- 3) The social media administrator(s) shall regularly monitor the City's social media accounts to ensure adherence to this Social Media Policy.
- 4) All City social media accounts must adhere to all applicable laws, rules and regulations and City Policies and Guidelines regarding internet security and privacy.
- 5) All requests to deviate from this Social Media Policy may only be approved by the City Manager at his or her discretion.

Recommended Content. Where possible, City social media accounts should state the following:

- a. That public comments on the site do not necessarily reflect the views of the City;
- b. That any ads, links and suggestions to other pages found on the City social media account are inserted by the social media operator and that the City does not endorse any of those sites nor does the City receive any revenue from the posting of those links.
- c. Proposed disclaimer: The purpose of this site is to present matters of public interest in the City of Moraine. We encourage the public to submit questions, comments and concerns, but please note this is a moderated online discussion and not a public forum. Once posted, the City reserves the right to delete any submissions that contain vulgar language, personal attacks of any kind or offensive comments that target or disparage any ethnic, racial or religious groups. Furthermore, the City also reserves the right to delete comments that:
 - 1) Are spam or include links to other sites;
 - 2) Are clearly off topic;
 - 3) Advocate illegal activity;
 - 4) Promote particular services, products or political organizations;
 - 5) Infringe on copyrights or trademarks;
 - 6) Use personally identifiable information;
 - 7) Contain individual-specific and other confidential information. Please note that the public comments expressed on this site do not reflect the opinions and position of the City of Moraine elected officials, officers or employees. If you have any questions concerning the operation of this online moderated discussion site, please contact the City of Moraine at (937) 535-1016.

Permissible Content. City personnel representing the City via social media outlets shall do the following:

- a) Keep posts timely;
- b) Keep posts directly related to the business of the City;
- c) Observe and abide by all copyright, trademark and service mark restrictions;
- d) Personnel who wish to post information on the City's social media must provide relevant information, activities or events to the social media administrator(s), who shall post appropriate content promptly.

Prohibited Content.

- a) Comments or materials which are profane, obscene, sexual or defamatory in nature;
- b) Comments or materials which contain sexually aggressive or harassing language;
- c) Pornographic materials or comments;

- d) Personal attacks or comments or materials which demean an individual or group of individuals on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, gender, disability, or any other category protected by law;
- e) Comments or materials supporting/opposing a political issue or candidate;
- f) Commercial advertising or soliciting commerce or promoting private business enterprise;
- g) Comments encouraging or promoting illegal activity or which promotes or advocates violence or the threat of violence;
- h) Comments or materials which compromise the privacy or safety of an individual or group of individuals;
- i) Comments violating the intellectual property laws;
- j) Comments violating client or patient confidentiality;
- k) Comments about the guilt or innocence of any suspect or arrestee, or comments concerning pending prosecutions;
- l) Comments or materials which violate the terms of service of the website, webpage, or social media account;
- m) Comments or materials which contain non-public or confidential City information;
- n) Links to other websites, webpages, or social media accounts, unless otherwise permitted by this Social Media Policy.

The failure of the City to delete any prohibited content, whether posted by an employee, official, or a member of the public, shall not be construed as a waiver of such prohibitions and shall not affect the validity of this Social Media Policy or the City's ability to delete such prohibited content in the future.

Employee Responsibilities:

Employees using any social media for City-related functions are bound by the City's equipment use policy, Section 6.7. Employees using an account for City work purposes must identify themselves as a City employee in all instances.

- 1) Information published using social media networking shall not reveal confidential (e.g. tax information), proprietary (e.g. police investigation techniques) or other information which reveals policies or practices of the City of Moraine which may impair or compromise the activities of the City. Extreme caution shall be used in the sharing of any information relating to the City of Moraine's practices and policies on social media sites. This guideline shall extend to communications that are deemed confidential by the social media and which are restricted to a limited sub-set of users of the social media. Security breaches are common and alleged restricted access may not prevent the confidential information from being shared beyond those for which it was intended. ~~for~~
- 2) It shall be the duty of all City employees using social media to be respectful regarding the City of Moraine, fellow employees, residents, vendors, colleagues in other agencies, and local business owners. Employees shall refrain from making references to City of Moraine vendors, residents, business owners, colleagues or other individuals without their expressed written consent.

- 3) Employees shall refrain from writing negative comments, as well as recommendations or offering referrals because it may give the appearance the City endorses certain individuals, companies or organizations being referenced.
- 4) Social media activities shall not interfere with work commitments. Social media may be good resources for developing business relationships or providing information to residents or prospective residents. It is more likely, however, that employees may find themselves wasting work time on social networking. Any social networking shall not interfere with the employee's primary job responsibilities.
- 5) Employees shall respect copyright laws, and reference and cite sources appropriately.
- 6) Employees shall be responsible for reading, knowing, and complying with any terms of service required by any social media while engaging in social media.
- 7) Employees shall not knowingly or recklessly post false information about the City, supervisors, co-workers, public officials, or those who have a relationship with the City.
- 8) Where no policy or guideline exists, employees should use their professional judgment and take the most prudent action possible. Consult with your immediate supervisor or Division Head if you are uncertain.

Public Comment Guidelines:

Social media websites maintained by the City should display this link to the public comment guidelines:

*“Thank you for visiting the City of Moraine <insert name of social media website>. **This site is not continuously monitored. For emergencies, call 911.***

The purpose of this website is to share photos, video and information of public interest in the City of Moraine with our many residents, businesses, and visitors. The City strives to respond to comments within a timely manner during normal business days. This is not a work order request, if you need one call (937) 535-1000.

By using or accessing the City of Moraine <insert name of social media website> page, you agree to comply with <insert name of social media website>'s Terms and Conditions. Any comments submitted to this page and its list of fans are public records subject to disclosure pursuant to Section 149.43 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Please note if you post a comment, the City reserves the right to delete submissions that contain vulgar language, personal attacks of any kind, or comments that are offensive to a person with reasonable sensitivity or target or disparage age, race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sexual preference, handicapped or disabled, genetic information, or status as a veteran or disabled veteran of the U.S. armed forces. Further, the City also reserves the right to delete comments that: (i) are spam or include links to other sites; (ii) are clearly off topic; (iii)

advocate illegal activity; (iv) promote or oppose particular services, products, or political organizations and candidates; or (v) infringe on copyrights or trademarks.

We reserve the right to remove or ban any user for comments that violate our Terms of Use. By accessing, affiliating with, or commenting on this page, your identity may be visible to third parties not affiliated with the City of Moraine. In addition, third parties may be able to access your profile and personal information. The City of Moraine is not responsible for access to your identity, profile, or personal information by third parties. It is the express responsibility of the user, or his/her parent or guardian, to protect the user's identity, profile, and personal information.

Comments expressed on this site, other than those posted by the City of Moraine, do not reflect the opinions and position of the City of Moraine or its officers and employees. If you have any questions concerning the operation of this online moderated discussion site, please contact the City of Moraine at (937) 535-1000 or cityofmoraine@gmail.com.

The City's complete Social Media Policy can be found here: [\[REDACTED\]](#)."

B. Employees' Personal Social Media Accounts:

The City recognizes many City employees use social media tools such as Facebook in their personal lives. Therefore, this Social Media Policy provides guidelines for City employees when they communicate on social media sites as a private party where doing so may be considered a violation of their rights of free speech, and requires employees when they are speaking as a private party to clearly communicate their status in doing so and do not violate laws and rules of employment designed to protect and maintain the stability and integrity of the workplace, to protect confidential information, to adhere to the rules of ethics, public records laws and open meeting law requirements, among other compelling governmental interests.

- 1) The City prohibits use or updates to personal social networking sites with City equipment and/or on City time. Be advised using personal social media accounts for City or work-related purposes may subject such accounts to the Ohio Public Records Act.
- 2) Employees may not use their City email account or password in conjunction with a personal social networking site.
- 3) Personal or private business venture social media accounts must not be tied to or connected with the City.
- 4) Posting proprietary information or content, or confidential information related to the City is prohibited on employees' personal social media accounts.
- 5) If commenting on City business in their personal capacity, employees must use a disclaimer which establishes that their comments represent their own opinions and do not represent those of the City. The intent here is to ensure content posted by employees clearly reflect those comments are personal and not being made on behalf of the City unless authorized by the City.
- 6) Employees must not attribute personal statements or opinions to the City when engaging in private blogging or postings on social media sites and if through their identification or posts any confusion as to whether their statements might be attributable to the City they

must clarify that their posts are their own and not those of the City. Where confusion or doubt is likely to arise regarding the personal nature of social media activities, an employee must include a disclaimer clarifying that the social media communications reflect only the employee's personal views and do not necessarily represent the views of the City. A clear and conspicuous disclaimer will usually be sufficient to dispel any confusion which may arise.

- 7) Employees may not use a City brand, logo or other City identifiers on their personal sites, nor post information which purports to be the position of the City without prior authorization from the City Manager or unless authorized by Federal, State, or local law or the specific terms of an applicable collective bargaining agreement.
- 8) Employees with personal sites or other types of social media which can be accessed by the public, shall not place or allow photographs or depictions of themselves dressed in uniform and/or displaying official identification, patches, or badges, or in any other way, either directly or indirectly, identify themselves as an employee of the City for any reason, without prior approval from the City Manager or unless authorized by Federal, State, or local law or the specific terms of an applicable collective bargaining agreement.

City employees should be mindful their comments do not impair working relationships in the City for which confidentiality is important, do not impede the performance of City related job duties, or do not impair discipline or harmony among co-workers.

Violation of this Social Media Policy may result in discipline, up to and including termination.