

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else's blog, personal web site, social networking site, video sharing site, podcast, wiki, message board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with the City, as well as any other form of electronic communication.

Keep in mind that you may be disciplined up to and including termination for violation of this policy or if your conduct adversely affects your job performance, the performance of fellow employees or otherwise adversely affects the City, its residents, suppliers, or the people who work on behalf of the City.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines, protocols, and procedures to ensure that communication between the City and residents of the City of Herington is efficient, effective, consistent, timely, and transparent. In addition, this policy addresses the responsibilities of individual employees and city officials with regard to social media use. Lastly, this policy outlines terms of use and comment policy in order to help facilitate and enhance the transfer of information to the public through the City's Social Media.

### **Communication Objectives**

1. Inform citizens about the City's policies, programs, services, projects, and initiatives through communication that is effective, timely, accurate, and consistent.
2. Consult and inform stakeholders when establishing or developing priorities, policies, programs, and services where reasonable and practical.
3. Engage in a proactive communications program that uses a variety of platforms to accommodate diverse needs and that reflects the diversity of the community.
4. Ensure the City is visible and responsive to the citizens it serves.

### **Ownership**

All website and social media systems and resources owned or controlled by the City and all messages, text, graphics, images, and electronic files and other information transmitted by, received through or stored in these systems and resources are the property of the City.

### **Platforms**

1. City of Herington Website - Our City's website is a platform for residents to get information as well as make payment for City services.
  - A. The City Manager will determine what information will be posted to the

City's website.

B. Linking to an outside news source as a way to promote City of Herington-related information is prohibited. Exceptions to this would be in the case of a cosponsored event.

2. Social Media - The City of Herington has an interest in engaging, informing, and cultivating its stakeholder audience using traditional as well as new media. Social media has become one of the main channels of communication for many and is an excellent communication tool for the City. By leveraging social media as a primary communication tool, we are engaging our customers on their terms and supporting our business goals. Sharing our own original content personalizes our messages and demonstrates our "social persona." In social media, there are appropriate occasions for both original and shared content.

### **Authorized Users**

A. All social media accounts that represent the City will be approved by the City Manager. If specific departments are interested in creating a social media presence, they will need to get approval from the City Manager.

B. The City of Herington reserves the right to temporarily or permanently suspend access to any page or social media platform at any time.

### **Be Honest and Accurate**

Make sure you are always honest and accurate when posting information or news, and if you make a mistake, correct it quickly. Be open about any previous posts you have altered. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. Never post any information or rumors that you know to be false about the City, fellow employees, the Governing Body, the City's residents, or anyone else working with or on behalf of the City.

### **Post Only Appropriate and Respectful Content**

Maintain the confidentiality of the City's private or confidential information. Do not post internal reports, policies, procedures or other internal business-related confidential communications.

### **Community Standards**

We encourage a dialogue with our audience regarding City services and related topics. Communication and self-expression must be made with respect and courtesy to others. As such, municipal site administrators will remove a comment if it violates our terms of use:

## Terms of Use

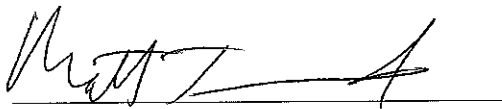
The purpose of City social media is to help facilitate and enhance the transfer of information to the public through city's social media platforms. All use must further that purpose and comply with the following terms of use and comment policy.

### Terms of Use & Comment Policy

1. Any comment posted by a member of the public on an official City Social Media Page or Department Social Media Page is the opinion of the commentator only, and its publication on such Page shall not imply endorsement of or agreement by the City.
  
2. All Social Media established by the City, including the City's Social Media Page and those Pages utilized by individual City departments, is not intended to create a public forum. As such, each Page shall have, in a place visible to the public or accessible by link, a notice that comments containing any of the following forms of content are prohibited and will be removed:
  - a. Comments not related to the topic of discussion;
  - b. Profane, obscene, uncivil, harassing, or inappropriate language or content;
  - c. Sexual content;
  - d. Solicitations of commerce;
  - e. Promotion or encouragement of illegal activity;
  - f. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public, public systems, the City, its employees, or public officials;
  - g. Promotes political candidates, issues or viewpoints except as provided by City sanctioned debates or forums;
  - h. Defamatory remarks, personal attacks, or threats against any individual person or group of people.
  - i. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any party;
  - j. Any content in violation of or inconsistent with federal, state, or local laws and ordinances;
  - k. Links to any outside websites that are inconsistent with this policy;
  - l. Content that is repetitive or duplicative;
  - m. Any content not listed herein but that is otherwise inconsistent with the spirit of civility intended by these Terms of Use & Comment Policy.
  
3. The following notice shall be provided along with the comment policy above: The City reserves the right to remove content that is deemed in violation of this policy, applicable law, or the City's employee handbook. Any participant on a City Social Media Page or Department Social Media Page that repeatedly violates the commenting guidelines as set forth in this policy may be permanently removed from the City's social media page(s). The City of Herington reserves the right to temporarily or permanently suspend access to any Page at any time.

## Employee Use

Social networking is meant to be social, so having employees interact with our posts can enhance information sharing, morale, and education throughout the organization and our service area (City Personnel policies still apply). Personal social media accounts established by employees should not be presented as official voices of the City, and departmental or project-based accounts should only be established by or in collaboration with the Community Development Department. The City of Herington recognizes that these guidelines will continually evolve as new technologies and social networking tools emerge. The City of Herington reserves the right to change the communication policy at any time to reflect the current marketing techniques with relation to changes in technology.

 3-14-19

Matt Townsend  
City Manager