

Matrix City Social Media Policy

Given the multitude of concerns (legal, political, and ethical) raised by social networking (Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc.) this policy (effective immediately) establishes prudent and acceptable practices regarding Matrix City officials and employees (personnel) use of the internet.

While Matrix City encourages its personnel to enjoy and make good use of their off-duty time, certain activities on the part of its personnel may become a problem if they have the effect of impairing the work of any official or employee; harassing, demeaning, or creating a hostile working environment; disrupting the smooth and orderly flow of work; or harming the goodwill and reputation of the City among its citizens or in the community. For these reasons, the City reminds its personnel that the following guidelines apply in their use of social media, both on and off duty.

Under this policy, the City disavows, and is not responsible for any sites, posts, opinions, or content not coordinated through and approved by the City Manager or Mayor. If City personnel posts data purporting to be on behalf of the City while using a social media site without the approval of the City Manager, the City is not responsible for that content, such content is not to be construed as reflecting the views or opinions of the Mayor, City Council or City management, and the City is not responsible for archiving such content in accordance with the records retention schedule, or providing copies in accordance with the Texas Public Information Act (PIA). Furthermore, the absence of explicit reference to a particular site does not limit the extent of the application of this policy. If you are uncertain, consult your supervisor or manager before proceeding.

General Guidelines

1. While on duty, the use of City equipment or internet service by personnel must be limited to work related tasks. Social media activities should never interfere with work commitments.
2. No personnel may post online content as a representative of the City, or on the City's behalf without the City Manager's or Mayor's approval.
3. If discussing City related issues, but not posting online content as an approved representative of the City or on the City's behalf, all personnel must make it clear that they are speaking for themselves, and not on behalf of the City by displaying a disclaimer that states: "This is my own opinion and not necessarily the opinion or position held by the City or City Council."

Guidelines for Official City Social Media Sites and Content

1. All City-sanctioned social media sites shall be maintained by the City Manager. Any content to be posted on City-sanctioned social media sites must meet the approval of the City Manager or Mayor before it is posted.
2. All personnel that engage in social media activities on the City's behalf and all City-sanctioned social media sites shall adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies, including the Texas Public Information Act and the records retention schedule. All content must be managed, stored and retrieved to comply with these laws.
3. All online content posted as representative of the City, or on the City's behalf shall clearly indicate that it is subject to records retention and public disclosure. All City-sanctioned social media sites shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to records retention and public disclosure.
4. Any content posted as representative of the City, or content posted to a City-sanctioned social media site containing any of the following shall not be allowed:
 - a. Comments not topically related to the particular site or blog article being commented upon;
 - b. Profane language or content;
 - c. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis 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. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
 - f. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
 - g. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.
5. Content submitted for posting on a City-sanctioned social media site that is deemed unsuitable for posting by the City Manager because it violates criteria in the preceding item (Item 4, above) of this Policy, shall be retained pursuant to the records retention schedule along with a description of the reason the specific content is deemed unsuitable for posting.
6. Any hyperlinks posted on a City sanctioned social media site shall be accompanied by a disclaimer which states: "The City guarantees neither the authenticity, accuracy, appropriateness nor security of the link, website, or content linked thereto."

All personnel are to sign copies of this policy and be trained in its meaning.

Personnel found in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.