



ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

APP COMM 02.2010

City Administrator Approval:

Approved by City Council:

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SUBJECT: Social Media Policy

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Social media is a term encompassing a wide range of online activities integrating technology and social interaction. The City of Savage recognizes that social media sites can be valuable tools for communicating with the public, promoting City services, and enhancing the community's identity. This policy provides guidelines as to how the City, its council members, employees, and board, committee and commission members should conduct themselves online. It helps safeguard the City's brand reputation and encourages City council members, employees, and board, committee and commission members to responsibly share the City's message.

POLICY

All City of Savage social media accounts and content must focus on City-related business, and they must adhere to the tone and persona of the City of Savage brand as covered in the City's social media training. City social media accounts may be modified or removed by the City at any time and without notice. City of Savage social media accounts are considered official City communications and are subject to State of Minnesota public data practice laws. Content maintained in a social media format that is related to City business, including subscriber lists and comments, is a public record and is archived for data retention purposes subject to the Minnesota Data Practices Act.

The City of Savage name, logo and links to the City's website shall be included on all City social media accounts whenever possible.

The City welcomes participation and comments from the public on its social media sites. Those who make comments shall exchange opinions and ideas in a climate of mutual respect. The City will not edit any posted comments. However, comments posted by the members of the public will be removed if they:

- Are vulgar, offensive, threatening or harassing language, or personal attacks.
- Contain 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.
- Are commercial promotions or spam.
- Are potentially libelous.
- Advocate illegal activity.
- Are obscene or contain sexual content, or links to obscene or sexual content.
- Contain information that could compromise the safety or security of the public or public system.
- Contain private or personal information published without consent.

AUTHORIZED USERS OF CITY SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

The Communications Division shall have administrative rights to all City of Savage social media accounts, and will oversee the sites to ensure they are properly maintained.

Only authorized employees and the City Administrator may post as official representatives of the City on department specific social media accounts. Employees representing the City of Savage via social media outlets must abide by the terms of this policy and conduct themselves in accordance with the City's personnel policy.

City of Savage social media accounts shall not be used by any employee, elected official, board, committee or commission member to express personal views or promote personal agendas.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

Departments wishing to establish their own social media account to promote City-related business must first discuss their request with the Communications Division and the City Administrator to ensure consistency with the City's communication strategy. Once approved, the requesting department shall be responsible for all content posted to the account. The Communications Division will review departmental social media accounts and reserves the right remove inappropriate information. Each City of Savage social media account shall include an introductory statement that specifies the purpose of the City's social media outreach.

USE OF PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

The City respects the free speech rights of all its Council members, employees, and board, committee and commission members, but when using personal social media sites, they are expected and required to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the City's policies and standards of conduct.

Council members, employees, and board, committee and commission members personal social media sites shall not: (1) represent themselves as a spokesperson for the City Council, a City board, committee, or commission, the City administration, or any City department without prior authorization from the Communications Division and City Administrator, (2) use a City brand, trademark, logo or other City identifiers on their personal sites, (3) post personal information, beliefs, or statements that purport to be the position of the City without prior authorization from the Communications Division and the City Administrator, (4) engage in any activity or conduct that violates federal, state or local law, or constitutes a conflict of interest, (5) communicate to the public about City related information using a closed-group or invitation-only account, (6) use social media accounts to communicate with City employees about City-related matters, or (7) use their City email account in connection with a personal social media networking account.

Council members, employees, and Council appointed board, committee and commission members are strongly encouraged to consider the impact of social media statements prior to posting. The City strives to be professional in its operations and processes. The following best practices and guidelines are strongly recommended to ensure that the personal and professional use of social media by Council members, employees, and Council appointed board, committee and commission members, is done in a responsible manner.

- Posts that express favoritism and/or bias for or against any individual or group of individuals reflect poorly on the Council member, employee, and Council appointed board, committee and commissioner members, as well as the City and its residents.
- Council members, employees, and board, committee and commission members should consider whether "liking", "sharing", "retweeting", or "commenting" on social media posts could be perceived as an endorsement of or about the City, its employees, constituents, other public officials, suppliers, vendors or contractors.
- Council members, Council appointed board, committee and commission members should be mindful that posting content regarding City-related matters could inadvertently result in the violation of the Open Meeting Law if enough other officials engage on the post, resulting in a quorum. If this occurs, the online conversations should immediately cease, with no further posts by the officials. The conversation must not be deleted and the City Administrator should be notified.

Violations of this policy by an employee may result in discipline in accordance with the City's personnel policy.