

CITY OF VICTORIA

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY AND PROCEDURE

PURPOSE

To address the changing way citizens communicate and obtain online information relating to the missions, programs, and goals of the City online, the City of Victoria participates in social media platforms to reach a broader audience. This policy sets guidelines for use of social media in an effort to ensure timely, accurate and appropriate use of those online platforms to deliver clear, concise and consistent messages on behalf of the City.

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all City of Victoria employees and the staff of the Office of Emergency Management.

POLICY

- A. All official City of Victoria social media platforms are considered an official extension of the City's information and communications network.
- B. All City requests to develop and maintain social media sites must be approved by the Department Director and the City Communications Director, and comply with this policy.
- C. It is the responsibility of the Communications Director to oversee the City's official web presence via social media platforms. It is the responsibility of each Department Director of any City department approved to use social media, to closely monitor the posts to their department's social media platforms.
- D. It is the responsibility of the Information Technology (IT) Department to administer archives (back-ups), security and monitoring measures that support this policy. The Victoria City Attorney requires that any social media platforms used by the City of Victoria must be archived by the City IT Department. If a social media platform cannot be archived, it cannot be used.
- E. The City will maintain official pages per each approved social media platform, which are to be created, maintained and monitored by the approved employees, department directors, the City Communications Director, and the City Web Services Specialist in IT.
- F. Potential Uses for social media include, but are not limited to, information about city events, activities and issues. The use of social media use during emergencies is highly encouraged.

- G. The use of social media must comply with applicable federal, state, and city laws, regulations, and policies, as well as proper business etiquette. This includes adherence to established laws and policies regarding copyright, records retention, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), U.S. Constitution First Amendment, privacy laws and information security policies established by the City of Victoria.
- H. Wherever possible, links should direct users back to the City’s official website for more information, forms, documents or online services.
- I. Employee Code of Ethics. Employees representing the City via social media platforms must conduct themselves at all times, as representatives of the City of Victoria and use the highest ethical standards:
- a. Respect the posts and opinions of our citizens;
 - b. Keep interactions factual and accurate;
 - c. Strive for transparency and openness in all social media use, never seek to “spin” or “embellish” information;
 - d. Employees will if needed, provide links to credible sources of information to support interactions;
 - e. Employees will respect the established usage rules of the particular social media platform utilized (e.g. Facebook’s user policy); and
 - f. Employees will protect City’s privacy and internal permissions policies.
- J. Employee Code of Conduct
- a. All employees posting on behalf of the City must have permission from their department director and must complete “Social Media Training Class” offered by the City Attorney and the City Communications Director.
 - b. Approved employees can use social media but must ensure each of the approved uses and sites adheres to the social media policy for appropriate use, message and branding, consistent with the goals and mission of the City of Victoria.
 - c. Employees should not commit a City or department to any action or initiative unless they have prior authority to do so.
 - d. The City does not post on any social media site other than approved City social media platforms. (The only exceptions to this rule are Department Directors and other City administrative officials.)
 - e. Employees making comments on external social media sites must not represent or portray themselves as a City employee authorized to speak on behalf of the City. This does not in any way prohibit employees from exercising their first amendment right to free speech.
 - f. In general, employees should refrain from posting information, including written statements, photographs and videos, about the City using their personal Social Media accounts. If employees choose to do so, they should avoid any posting that might be interpreted as an official statement made on behalf of the City, on

behalf of your department or that might compromise perceptions of your ability to do your job in an unbiased and professional manner.

- g. Employees cannot not use the City logo or any other City images or iconography on personal media sites or use the City name, logo, images or iconography to promote a product, cause, or political party or candidate.

- K. Violation of these standards may result in the removal of departmental pages from social media platforms. The City Attorney, Communications Director and the City Web Services Specialist retain the authority to remove social media information.

- L. If the individual department allows public comments in their social media outlet(s), then the City of Victoria reserves the right to remove any messages or postings for any reason, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Obscene comments;
 - b. Materials violating copyrights, trademark right, or other intellectual property of any third party;
 - c. Comments unrelated to the topic of the forum;
 - d. Commercial promotions or spam; or
 - e. Hyperlinks to material that is not directly related to the discussion.

PROCEDURES

- A. Departments requesting to post information on the City's official social media pages must fill out the attached "Social Media Site Request" form detailing why it is necessary, the proposed social media solution, the resource requirements for such use, and what will deem its use successful.

- B. The City Communications Director will have final approval of all social media requests.

- C. If approved, Department Directors and/or designee(s) will be responsible for creating, maintaining, and monitoring their departmental social media pages(s) and will act as an official spokesperson of the City, via social media platforms.

- D. The City Communications Director and/or the City Web Services Specialist will maintain a list of all approved users and will provide a link to all social media pages on the official www.victoriatx.org website.

- E. Only City e-mail addresses or e-mails authorized in advance by the Information Technology (IT) Department will be posted on the site or used to create the web site accounts. Use of generic email addresses, for example, pio@victoriatx.org, is appropriate to create social media accounts.

- F. To the extent that design parameters of the host site allows, City of Victoria pages will conform to the following:
 - a. Be identified as an official City of Victoria posting;
 - b. Contain appropriate staff contact information;

- c. Contain the City logo or Departmental logo;
 - d. Have a link to the appropriate page of the City's website; and
 - e. Specify that all content posted is subject to Texas Open Records laws.
- G. The Department Head and/or designees(s) will ensure the content of their departmental social media outlet(s) is not deleted until backing up or archiving has been accomplished.
- H. The City Web Services Specialist will ensure that regular backups or archiving, are performed on all social media platforms.
- I. All content on any City of Victoria social media outlets is kept in accordance with the City's records retention policies.
- J. Delete a post. The following procedure will be used if a post on a social media site does not comply with the City social networking policy. No social media post will be deleted until these steps are followed:
- a. The employee should contact a supervisor or director to make sure they agree that the post needs to be deleted.
 - b. Take a "screen capture" of the entire "conversation thread" and email it to Thomas Gwosdz in the City Attorney Office. Call the Legal Office at 485-3520 to let them know you want to delete a post and have sent an email.
 - c. The City Attorney will determine if the post can be deleted.
 - d. If the post can be deleted, the City Attorney or his designee will contact the Web Services Specialist in IT at 485-3142.
 - e. The Web Services Specialist must perform a "back up" of the social media page before a post can be deleted.
 - f. The Web Services Specialist will delete the post after the page is archived. No other employees are authorized to delete social media posts.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Department Directors, the Communications Director, the Public Information Office, the City Attorney and/or IT Applications Developer, will be responsible for enforcing this policy.

FORMS

See attached "Social Media Site Request" form.

Social Media Site Request

Name & Title: _____

Department: _____ Date: _____

Brief statement of business need: _____

Brief description of proposed social media platform: _____

Benefits of the social media site (improved productivity, timeliness of providing information, etc.): _____

Is citizen input available for this social media site, and if so, how will they be managed?

What measures will be used to determine the success of this social media platform?

What goals do you have for this social media site?

Names of approved departmental social media staff contributors:

Approvals:

Department Head Approval: _____

Public Information Approval: _____