Social Media  
Administrative Policy #12  

September 2019

I. POLICY

Use of Social Media by employees, whether using the city's computers or personal computer systems, is also subject to the terms and restrictions set forth in this Policy. Limited and occasional use of city systems to use Social Media is acceptable, provided that it is done in a professional and responsible manner, does not otherwise violate city policy, is not detrimental to the city's best interests, and does not interfere with an employee's regular work duties. Social Media use from the city's systems is also subject to monitoring. The city's Acceptable Use of Information Technology Policies also applies to Social Media.

The city and its departments reserve the right to restrict or limit the subject matter of their social media sites and remove any content that is clearly off-topic or outside of the scope of the covered subject areas, or in violation of this policy or any applicable law.

Content deemed not suitable for posting by a city or departmental social media moderator and removed from social media sites shall be retained pursuant to the records retention schedule along with a description of the reason the specific content is deemed not suitable for posting.

II. CITY SPONSORED SOCIAL MEDIA

This policy establishes procedures for the proper use of social media sites governed by city employees with authorization from the Department Head and the Chief Information Officer. All social media sites shall provide the Chief Information Officer with full access to city-related social media sites either through the provision of login and password or Administrator Rights.

The Chief Information Officer will monitor content on social media sites to ensure adherence with this policy to include compliance with consistent citywide messages. The Chief Information Officer retains the authority to remove pages or close sites, if necessary.

A. Unacceptable Postings on City Sponsored Social Media

Employees who maintain city Sponsored Social Media shall not write any content or post any information that involves or are related to the following:
1. Non-public or confidential information.

2. Defamatory, libelous, offensive or demeaning material to include engaging in an unprofessional manner.

3. Personal or sensitive information of any kind.

4. Potential or actual litigation to include administrative proceedings involving the city or city employees.


6. Pornography or other similar offensive illegal materials.

7. Threatening comments about or related to anyone.

8. Illegal and/or banned substances and narcotics.

B. All social media content must be managed, stored and retrieved to comply with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and electronic discovery laws and policies.

C. Employees representing city government via social media must conduct themselves in a professional manner in compliance with the city's Standards of Conduct and other policies governing appropriate conduct.

D. Social Media sites are subject to the Library of Virginia's (LVA) Public Records Act to include city record retention requirements. All records must be maintained in a format that preserves the integrity of the original document or record and must be accessible by the Chief Information Officer.

III. USE OF PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA

Employees may not attribute personal statements, opinions, or beliefs to the city when using Social Media. If an employee is expressing his or her beliefs and/or opinions on Social Media or blog post, the employee may not, expressly or implicitly, represent himself or herself as an employee or representative of the city. Employees assume any and all risks associated with posting on Social Media.

This policy shall not seek to regulate users establishing and using personal social media accounts and other similar communications (e.g. personal Internet sites, blogs) for personal purposes outside of the workplace and using non-city equipment, resources, and information systems.

Accessing personal social media from the city's Information Technology environment, users are required to follow all city policies and procedures.
A. Unacceptable Postings on Personal Social Media

Personal social media use, as well as the use of other similar communications tools hosted externally or internally on city's hosted resources such as, but not limited to, forums and blogs, shall:

1. Include no statements or depictions stating or implying that the user represents the city.

2. Make no official statement of city policy or make a statement or depiction with the city's permission, whether implied or expressed, unless the user has received documented permission from the appropriate city authorities to communicate on the city's behalf in the non-city venues.

3. Not use the city's trademarks, logos, and any other city intellectual property in connection with any personal Social Media activity.

4. Not engage in any Social Media use that may harm or tarnish the image, reputation, and/or goodwill of the city and/or any of its employees.

5. Not make any discriminatory, disparaging, defamatory, or harassing comments when blogging or otherwise engaging in any conduct prohibited by the city's Workplace Harassment Policy.

6. Not download or copy content from their personal social media accounts to the city of Portsmouth systems without permission.

7. Not be used to post to newsgroups from a city email address without containing a disclaimer stating that the opinions expressed are strictly their own and not necessarily those of the city unless posting is in the course of business duties. Users are encouraged to include in personal electronic communications discussing or relating to city business, a disclaimer that states, "The views I express are my own and do not reflect the official view or position of city of Portsmouth."

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

Approved:

[Signature]
City Manager