

City of Shoreview

Social Media Policy

Date: 01/16/2019

Purpose

The City of Shoreview uses a variety of forms of media to communicate to the public in an accurate and timely manner. The City of Shoreview's website (www.shoreviewmn.gov) is the City's primary and predominant internet presence. The City uses social media as a secondary method to provide two-way communication with the public to present news and information relating to the City of Shoreview.

The City of Shoreview will retain authority over and provide a detailed expectation of what is "spoken" on behalf of the City on social media sites. The City will determine, at its discretion, how its social media and online presence will be designed, implemented and managed as part of its overall communications strategy. Social media resources may be modified or removed by the City at any time and without notice as necessary means to maintain the integrity of both communications and information technology functions.

This policy provides guidance for employees and the public on how the City uses, manages, and addresses comments on its various social media sites.

Scope

This policy applies to any existing or proposed social media and online accounts created by City employees during the course and scope of their work. This policy does not govern personal use of social media during work hours or personal social media sites. However, in accordance with this policy and the employee handbook, employees must exercise good judgement when using personal social media to not bring negative publicity or discredit to the City of Shoreview or its employees. The policy applies to all full-time and associate employees, temporary employees, and interns.

Section 1 – Managing Social Media Sites

The purpose of Section 1 is to provide guidelines for employees who are responsible for monitoring and responding in an official capacity on the various City social media accounts.

1.1 The establishment and use of City social media sites by any City department are subject to the approval of the City Manager or his/her designees.

1.2 City policies, rules, regulations and standards of conduct apply to employees who participate in social networking while conducting City business. Use of official City of Shoreview e-mail addresses while communicating as a City employee is considered conducting City business.

1.3 All City employees have a responsibility to help communicate accurate and timely information to the public in a professional manner. Any employee who identifies a mistake in reporting should bring the error to the attention of his or her supervisor or other appropriate staff.

1.4 Employees are prohibited from disclosing or disseminating data classified under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act as private or confidential to anyone other than government employees whose job duties require access to the data and must route data practices requests to the Deputy City Clerk. Employees must also work to avoid releasing data that might lead to the release of private or confidential data. For example, avoid discussing information on social media that might lead to the identification of a resident complaining about their neighbor's property, or the victim of a crime or a witness to a crime.

1.5 Employees are prohibited from using City resources to participate in personal political activity while on City time or while discharging City responsibilities. Employees are prohibited from, in any manner, implying or suggesting that the City either supports a particular candidate, political issue or endorses the personal political opinions of the employee. Employees are expected to exercise great care, at all times, to distinguish their personal opinions about candidates or political issues from their role with the City.

1.6 Employees shall not represent that they are speaking or acting on behalf of the City of Shoreview, or that they are representing or presenting the interests of the City of Shoreview, unless they have been authorized to do so, and may not represent the City from their personal social media accounts.

1.7 Employees shall not use the City's social media sites to advertise products or services or conduct any activity meant to foster personal gain, financial or otherwise, including outside business or commercial activities.

Section 2 –Social Media Use

The purpose of Section 2 is to provide guidance for how the City communicates to residents, visitors, businesses and various audiences through social media outlets.

2.1 The Administration department or the City Manager's designee will be responsible for the content and upkeep of any social media sites the City may create. Whenever possible, City social media sites should link back to the City's website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business.

2.2 City of Shoreview social media sites are subject to Minnesota public records laws. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to City business is a public record and shall be retained in accordance with the City's adopted record retention schedule. Social media postings of short-term interest are considered transitory, incidental, and non-vital correspondence and are retained until read. Any public disclosure requests must be directed to the Shoreview Deputy Clerk.

2.3 The City of Shoreview does not share information gathered through its social media sites with third parties for promotional purposes. However, the content maintained on such sites are public records subject to disclosure pursuant to Chapter 13 Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.

2.4 The City of Shoreview makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information provided on its social media pages. However, several factors that are beyond the City's control (including unauthorized modification of electronic data, transmission errors, browser incompatibilities, information that has been cached on the local computer or storage device, or other aspects of electronic communication) can affect the quality of the information displayed on social media sites. For that reason, the City does not guarantee the accuracy of the information provided on its social media pages and is not liable for reliance on this information.

2.6 The City also reserves the right to have only one-way communications on social media sites.

Section 3 – Comments

The purpose for Section 3 is to educate and inform employees and the public on the City's policy concerning comments on the City's official social media sites.

3.1 The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of Section 3.2 or any applicable law after consulting with the City Attorney. Any content removed based on these guidelines, must be retained by the City for a reasonable period of time, including the time, date and identity of the poster, when available. If possible, archived data should reflect the context of the situation it was removed from.

3.2 Although the City welcomes participation/comments from the public on its social media pages, these pages are not a public forum. Comments are subject to public disclosure laws and the City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content or comments that contain:

- Defamatory, obscene, profane or vulgar language
- Potentially libelous comments
- Personal attacks of any kind, insults, or threatening language
- Obscene or racist comments or images
- Defamatory, obscene, abusive, or inappropriate remarks toward any person or entity, including any ethnic, racial or religious group
- Sexual content or links to sexual content
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Comments or links to material not related to the original item posted
- Content that encourages or promotes illegal activity
- Private, personal information published without consent

- Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party; infringe on copyrights or trademarks
- Plagiarized material
- Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems
- Comments or content in support of or opposition to political campaigns or religious groups

Approved Date 01/22/19

TJCS

City Manager