

## **Purpose**

To address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet and the way the general public communicates and obtains information online, City of South Portland departments may consider using social media tools to reach a broader audience. The City encourages the use of social media to further the goals of the City and the missions of its departments, where appropriate.

The City has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is “spoken” on behalf of the City on social media sites. This policy establishes guidelines for the City’s use of social media.

## **Policy**

1. The City’s website (*www.southportland.org*) will remain the City’s primary and predominant Internet presence.
  - (a) The best, most appropriate City uses of social media tools fall generally into two categories:
    - (i) As channels for disseminating time-sensitive information as quickly as possible (for example, emergency information).
    - (ii) As marketing/promotional channels that increase the City’s ability to broadcast its messages to the widest possible audience.
  - (b) The use of RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds shall be the preferred method for dissemination of public information by the City.
  - (c) Wherever possible, content posted to City social media accounts will also be available on the City’s main website.
  - (d) Wherever possible, content posted to City social media accounts should contain links directing users back to the City’s official website for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services necessary to conduct business with the City.
2. No City employee, elected official, appointed official, contractor, department, board or committee may establish any social media identity, account, profile, page, or site (collectively, “social media account(s)”) in the name of or on behalf of the City or any City department unless the City Manager or his designee, the IT Director and the Department Head, as appropriate, have all approved the account. This requirement applies regardless of whether the account is established, accessed, or used by means of City information systems or by means of the employee’s or others’ information systems, and regardless of whether the account is established, accessed, or used from City or non-City premises.
3. Following approval under Section 2 above, Department Heads will be responsible for the content and upkeep of any social media accounts their department may create.
4. All City social media accounts shall comply with all appropriate City policies and standards, including, but not limited to, the City’s Personnel Policy and Information Systems Acceptable Use Agreement.
5. City social media accounts are subject to Maine’s public records disclosure law, the Freedom of Access Act (“Right-to-Know” law). Any content maintained in a social media

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format that is related to City business is a public record. The department maintaining the account is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any public records request for public records on social media, with assistance, if necessary, from the City's Public Access Officer. Content related to City business shall be maintained in an accessible format and so that it can be produced in response to a request. Wherever possible, such accounts shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure. Users shall be notified that public disclosure requests must be directed to the relevant Department Head.

6. Maine law and relevant record retention schedules apply to social media formats and social media content. The department maintaining an account shall preserve records required to be maintained pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule for the required retention period on a City server in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible.

7. Users and visitors to social media accounts shall be notified that the intended purpose of the account is to serve as a mechanism for communication between City employees and members of the public relating to the transaction of City business. City social media account articles and comments containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed:

- (a) Comments not topically related to the particular social medium 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, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation or any other status protected by law;
- (d) Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- (e) Solicitations of commerce;
- (f) Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
- (g) Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
- (h) Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

These guidelines must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained, including the time, date and identity of the poster when available.

8. Administration of City social media accounts.

- (a) IT Department staff will maintain a list of social media tools that are approved for use by City departments and staff.
- (b) IT Department staff will maintain a list of all City social media accounts. Department Heads must submit to the IT Director a list of all social media accounts maintained by the department, including the following information: (1) the name, hosting site and Internet address and date of inception for the account, and a statement of the purpose and scope of the department's use of the account; (2) all user names, passwords, and other log-in credentials for the account; (3) all authorized social media users for the department that have access to and/or responsibility for the account; and (4) the

administrative contacts and contact information for the account. The Department Head must promptly notify the IT Director of any changes in any of the foregoing, and of any new department social media accounts or pages and any termination of accounts or pages.

- (c) Department Heads shall ensure that all department-approved social media accounts and social media content are periodically reviewed for compliance with this policy. Department Heads are responsible for all social media content created, received, transmitted, stored, deleted, destroyed, and/or printed in the name of or on behalf of the City or the department.
- (d) The City must be able to immediately edit or remove content from social media accounts.
- (e) The City Manager, IT Director, Human Resources Director and Department Heads may monitor content on each of the social media accounts to ensure adherence to this Social Media Policy for appropriate use, message and branding consistent with the goals of City.
- (f) Violation of these standards may result in the removal of pages from social media outlets. The IT Director retains the authority to remove information.

9. The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this Social Media Policy or any applicable law.

10. The City will approach the use of social media tools as consistently as possible, enterprise-wide.

11. All new social media tools proposed for City use will be approved by the City Manager, IT Director and the appropriate Department Head.