



City of Elk River

Social Media Policy

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. This policy provides guidelines for the use, management, administration and oversight of City of Elk River-owned social media for official use. It also provides guidelines for employees' personal use of social media both at work off-duty.
- B. Social media come in many forms and include any method that facilitates electronic communications, including internet forums, blogs, online profiles, wikis, podcasts, pictures, video, email, instant messaging, music sharing, voice over IP, as well as social websites or online communities for business and personal use, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Yelp, YouTube, Google+, Flickr, Pinterest, Path, Picasa, Twitter, message Boards and chat rooms, among others.

II. CITY OF ELK RIVER MEDIA ACCOUNT ACCESS

- A. Creation and use of social media forums on behalf of the City of Elk River are allowed when there is a clear public entity purpose.
- B. All City of Elk River-authorized social media must only be created with a city approved email account and shall be authorized by the Mayor and belong to the City of Elk River. They are overseen and managed at the department level by authorized supervisors.
- C. Specific employees shall be authorized in writing to use the particular social media account on behalf of the City of Elk River, and are the only individuals permitted to access, manage, publish, comment and/or post on behalf of the City of Elk River on the media. These employees must conduct themselves at all times in accordance with all applicable City of Elk River policies.
- D. All posts on City of Elk River social media must be in accordance with this policy and must be monitored by the department. Departments must be able to edit or remove content in violation of this policy.

- E. Authorized employees must not share personal information about him/herself, other City of Elk River employees or citizens on the social media.
- F. Whenever possible, City of Elk River social media should link back to the official City of Elk River website for forms, documents, online services and other information for conducting business with the City of Elk River.
- G. Content on social media forums must abide by all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and policies, including copyright, trademark and printed material laws.

III. SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

- A. Users of City of Elk River social media forums must be notified on the forum site that:
 - 1. The intended purpose of the forum is to serve as a medium for communication between the City of Elk River and members of the public;
 - 2. Submission of comments by members of the public constitutes participation in a limited public forum;
 - 3. A comment posted by a member of the public is the opinion of the poster only;
 - 4. Publication of the comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by, the City of Elk River; and
 - 5. Comments do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the City of Elk River unless expressly stated by an authorized user.
- B. Comments on the City of Elk River's social media forums shall only be allowed when comments are consistent with the provisions of this policy.
- C. Posts and comments containing any of the following inappropriate forms of content are not allowed:
 - 1. Comments not topically related to the particular post, thread, topic or article being commented upon;
 - 2. Profane, obscene, sexual or violent language or content, or links to such;
 - 3. Defamatory or personal attacks;
 - 4. Threats of harm to any person or organization;

5. Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship, physical or mental disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression or any other characteristic protected by law;
 6. Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns, candidates or ballot measures of any kind;
 7. Encouragement of illegal activity;
 8. Conduct that violates any federal, state, or local law;
 9. Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
 10. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any person or entity, such as trademark, patent or copyright; or
 11. Confidential or proprietary information.
 12. If activity listed in 4, 7, 8 or 9 occurs, employees must secure the information and notify the Clearwater County Sheriff's department.
- D. Comments complying with these rules must be allowed to remain, regardless of whether they are favorable or unfavorable to the City of Elk River.
- E. The City of Elk River may edit, restrict or remove, in whole or in part, any content that violates this policy or applicable law. Content that is edited or removed must be retained in accordance with the relevant records retention schedule. This content must be accompanied by a description of the reason it was edited or removed, the date and time of edit or removal, and the identity of the person posting the content, if available.
- F. The Mayor may deny access to City of Elk River social media at any time and without prior notice to any person who violates these content guidelines.
- G. These content guidelines must be displayed on the social media site or made available by a link to the City of Elk River's official website.

IV. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY EMPLOYEES

- A. Employees may access social media while at work within the parameters of the City of Elk River's policies. They must limit use to personal time, such as breaks, lunch periods

and when off-duty. It must not interfere with, or be disruptive to, City of Elk River business or the employee's job duties.

- B. If an employee speaks about job-related content on personal social media, or makes reference to the City of Elk River, people may perceive that the employee is acting on behalf of the City of Elk River. When making such statements, the employee must clearly state that the statements are the employee's personal views and are not the views of the City of Elk River. An example of such disclaimer is "The views, opinions, ideas and information expressed are my own and do not reflect the views of my employer and are not in any way attributable to the City of Elk River."
- C. Participation in social media, whether through City of Elk River or non-City of Elk River internet resources, and whether made while on or off duty, must not violate the privacy rights of other City of Elk River employees, customers, citizens or business partners.
- D. When participating in social media, employees must not violate any City of Elk River policy.
- E. Employees may be disciplined, up to and including termination, for engaging in inappropriate social media activity while either at work or away from work that impacts the work of the City of Elk River, the employee or any other City of Elk River employee. Examples of inappropriate social media activity includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:
 - 1. Promoting or taking part in activities which violate federal, state or local law;
 - 2. Making false or misleading statements about any City of Elk River employee, the City of Elk River, City of Elk River customer, business partner, vendor or supplier;
 - 3. Making disparaging remarks toward or about any City of Elk River employee, the City of Elk River, City of Elk River customer, business partner, vendor or supplier that are based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship, physical or mental disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression or any other characteristic protected by law;
 - 4. Using social media to bully, threaten harm, harass, discriminate or retaliate against any City of Elk River employee, City of Elk River customer, business partner, vendor or supplier;
 - 5. Posting content or making comments that purport to express the opinions of the City of Elk River.

- F. Nothing in this policy grants an individual right to, or may be construed to provide, an expectation of privacy, including while engaged in personal social media:
1. Persons who use social media should be mindful that once content is placed online, it is no longer under their control and content shared through private social media does not always stay private.
 2. Employees have no expectation of privacy while using City of Elk River digital equipment or facilities for any purpose, including the use of email or other electronic communications of any kind, to download, transmit, post, comment or store information.
 3. Regardless of password use and privacy settings, and without notice to the employee, the City of Elk River may retrieve, review, monitor or log internet usage and content found on City of Elk River systems and digital equipment.
- G. Employees are free to express themselves as private citizens on social media sites about matters of public concern as long as their speech does not impair working relationships within the City of Elk River, impede the performance of duties, impair harmony among co-employees or negatively affect the public perception of the City of Elk River.
- H. Employees are cautioned that speech on- or off-duty, made pursuant to their official duties, is not protected speech under the First Amendment and may form the basis for discipline if deemed harmful to the City of Elk River.

APPENDIX "A"

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF THE CITY OF ELK RIVER SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

I, _____ acknowledge receipt of the City Personnel Policy, adopted on December 18, 2018.

- I understand that it is my responsibility to read and review this Policy.

- I understand that I am obligated to perform my duties of employment in conformance with the provisions of this Personnel Policy Manual and any additional rules, regulations, policies or procedures imposed by the office/department in which I work whether or not I choose to read the new Policy.

- I understand that this Policy may be modified without prior notice to me.

- I understand that should this Policy be modified that I will be provided with a copy of the modifications.

- I understand that this Policy may be provided to me in either paper format or by electronic access.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 20____.

(Employee)

I, _____, provided a copy (either electronically or by paper) of the City of Elk River Social Media Policy, as adopted by the City Council to

_____, on this _____ day of _____, 20____.

(Name - Title - Office/department)