

Social Networking



Purpose

To protect the City of Loveland, our residents, businesses, visitors and employees from potentially harmful misuse of social networking media.

Coverage

This policy applies to all regular, seasonal, part-time employees, with the exception of City Council members.

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, “social media” shall be defined as the collection of tools and online spaces available to help individuals and groups to generate content and engage in peer-to-peer conversations regarding content. Social media uses Internet- and web-based technologies to transform broadcast and share personal, professional, audio, visual or other documentary records.

The act of sharing information using social media shall be defined as “social media networking”. Examples of social media sites upon which individuals engage in social media networking includes but is not limited to: Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Flickr, LiveJournal, and Linked-In, and may also include personal or professional blogs.

It is agreed and understood that the use of social media and social media networking is a rapidly emerging form of electronic communication, and accordingly the principals of this policy shall be considered to apply to new and emerging methods of social networking even if not expressly discussed herein.

Policy

It is the policy of the City of Loveland that the use of social media and social media networking while at work shall be used only for approved professional purposes and only with the expressed written approval of the employee’s department head. Employees, because of their high profile roles working in public service, shall also follow the guidelines contained herein in their personal life.

Guidelines

1. Social media networking contributions shall have clear disclaimers that the views expressed by the author are the author's alone and do not represent the views of the City of Loveland.
2. Information published using social media networking shall not reveal confidential (e.g. tax information), proprietary (e.g. police investigation techniques) or other information which reveals policies or practices of the City of Loveland which may impair or compromise the activities of the City of Loveland. Extreme caution shall be used in the sharing of any information relating to the City of Loveland's practices and policies on social media sites. This guideline shall extend to communications that are deemed confidential by the social media and which are restricted to a limited sub-set of users of the social media. Security breaches are common and alledged restricted access may not prevent the confidential information from being shared beyond those for which it was intended for.
3. It shall be the duty of all City of Loveland employees to be respectful regarding the City of Loveland, fellow employees, residents, vendors, colleagues in other agencies, and local business owners. Employees shall refrain from making references to City of Loveland vendors, residents, business owners, colleagues or other individuals without their expressed written consent.
4. Social media activities shall not interfere with work commitments. Social networking media may be good resources for developing business relationships or providing information to residents or prospective residents. It is more likely, however, that employees may find themselves wasting work time on social networking. Any social networking shall not interfere with the employee's primary job responsibilities.
5. Employees shall remember at all times that their online presence—even when not at work—reflects the City of Loveland and public service in general. Employees shall be aware that actions captured via photos or other images, posts, or comments on social media can reflect that of the City of Loveland or your profession. Many social media networking tools require a user or participant to state their employer and job title, and thus the participant is for better or worse a representative of the City of Loveland.
6. Employees shall respect copyright laws, and reference and cite sources appropriately.
7. Employees shall refrain from writing recommendations or offering referrals because it may give the appearance that the City of Loveland endorses the individual, company or organization being referenced.
8. Employees may not use City of Loveland logos or images including but not limited to photographs without written consent of the City Manager.

9. Employees shall be responsible for reading, knowing, and complying with any terms of service required by any social media while engaging in social media networking.

Professional Judgment

The absence of, or lack of explicit reference to a specific site does not limit the extent of the application of this policy. Where no policy or guideline exist, employees shall use their professional judgment and take the most prudent action possible. Employees shall consult with their supervisor for guidance if the employee or employees are uncertain.

Disciplinary Action

Any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination from City service.

Approved: _____
Tom Carroll, City Manager

Effective Date: _____