

2.11 Social Media

1. Only those employees officially designated by the City have the authorization to speak on behalf of the City. When the City wishes to communicate publicly as an entity, whether to its employees or to the general public, it has well established means to do so. The City regards blogs and other forms of online discourse as primarily a form of communication and relationship among individuals.

2. Employees must exercise discretion while participating in social media, defined as online technologies and practices that people use to share opinions, insights, experiences, and perspectives with each other.

Social media can take many different forms, including, but not limited to:

A. Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, wikis, podcasts, emails, instant messaging, pictures and video.

B. Technologies include: blogs, picture-sharing, vlogs, wall-postings, music-sharing, crowdsourcing, and voice over IP, to name a few.

C. Examples of social media applications are Google Groups (reference, social networking), Wikipedia (reference), LinkedIn (professional networking), Plaxo (social networking), MySpace (social networking), Facebook (social networking), MouthShut.com and yelp.com (product reviews), Youmeo (social network aggregation), Last.fm (personal music), YouTube (social networking and video sharing), Avatars United (social networking), Second Life (virtual reality), Flickr (photo sharing), Twitter (social networking and microblogging), Open Diary (blogging), and other microblogs such as Jaiku.

3. Employees who choose to utilize social media need to understand what is recommended, expected and required when they discuss City-related topics, whether at work or personal time.

A. Employees must protect confidential and proprietary information.

1) Employees may not disclose or use City confidential or proprietary information in any online social networking platform.

2) Employees may not comment on confidential City financial information such as the City's future performance, business plans, grant applications, awards, protected safety information, personnel or medical information.

B. Employees must know and obey the City's conduct guidelines.

1) Review the following personnel policies to determine the appropriateness of posting something online:

a) 21 Standards of Conduct

b) Sharonville Policy Manual Section 2.3: Employee Conduct

c) Employee Responsibilities

d) Disciplinary Actions

C. Employees must respect the audience and City coworkers.

1) Remember that the City is a regional organization whose employees and constituents reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view.

2) Employees may not distribute ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, etc., or engage in other online conduct that might be considered objectionable or inflammatory. The City expects employees to use good judgment.

Employees unclear on the parameters should discuss it with the appropriate Department Manager.

3) Posting or publishing on any form of online social media is solely the employee's responsibility.

4. Violation of an employee's online responsibilities may result in the appropriate disciplinary action including termination of employment.