

Section Name:	Employee Relations	Effective Date:	July 16, 2018
Section Number:	400	Date of Revision:	
Policy Number:	26		
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Subject: Social Media (Social Networking) Policy

1. Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for employee use of social media, which should be broadly defined for purposes of this policy to include blogs, wikis, microblogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, message boards, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites, and other sites and services that permit users to share information with others in a contemporaneous manner.
2. Definitions:
  - 2.1 **Social Media** is defined as computer-mediated technologies that facilitate the creation of sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks.
  - 2.2 **Social Networking** is defined as a means of communicating with others over the internet for social or business purposes. Typically, this interaction occurs on sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.
  - 2.3 **Blogs** is defined as a discussion or information website published on the World Wide Web consisting of discrete, often informal diary-style text entries ('posts')
  - 2.4 **Microblogging** is defined as a combination of blogging and instant messaging that allows users to create short messages to be posted and shared with an audience online.
  - 2.5 **Twitter** is defined as an online news and social networking service where users post and interact with messages, called "tweets" that are visible to other users.
  - 2.6 **Wiki** is defined as a website on which users collaboratively modify content and structure directly from the web browser.
3. Statement of Policy:
  - 3.1 The City recognizes that the internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information using a

wide variety of social media as defined above. However, the use of social media can pose risks to the City's confidential, privileged and proprietary information, reputation and brands, and can jeopardize the City's compliance with business rules and laws. To minimize all these risks, to avoid loss of productivity or job performance, and to ensure that the City's assets are used only for appropriate business purposes, the City expects employees to adhere to the following guidelines and rules regarding the use of social media both in and out of the office.

Apart from personal use of social media in accordance with this policy, the City encourages its employees to participate responsibly in these media as a means of generating interest in the City's services and in creating business opportunities.

The Social Media Policy will be interpreted as being in-addition to and consistent with the City's Computer/Electronic Communications/Voice Mail Policy, Code of Ethics Policy, as well as its policies related to Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment.

Employees are protected by the National Labor Relations Act and thus are permitted in Social Media, and other formats, to discuss or publish matters related to self-organization, to matters related to compensation, complaints, grievances, safety, or other terms and conditions of employment, or to engage in concerted protected activity. Interpretations of this policy will be made in this expressed context in order not to infringe upon such rights.

- 3.2 Social Media Application of Policy. This policy applies to all types of social networking activity (a) using City computers, mobile devices, or other technology, and (b) using Non-City technology when linked to the City's systems. Nevertheless, when engaged in social networking, even on Non-City technology that is not linked to the City's systems, City personnel should use this policy as a guide. In addition, they should never attribute such personal postings to the City or imply that they are endorsed or written by the City; if work affiliation is listed, and there is a possibility of confusion that such statements will be attributed to the City, the posting or site should include the following disclaimer: "***The statements and views expressed in this posting are my own and do not reflect those of the City of Monroe.***"

3.3 General Guidelines.

- Unless authorized, do not imply or suggest you are writing on behalf of the City.
- Unless previously authorized by the City, or in the exercise of concerted protected activity, do not use the City's logos, brand names, slogans, or other trademarks, or post any confidential,

privileged or proprietary information of the City, without prior written permission from the City Manager.

- Do not export or upload any customer-related contact information to any networking site, or any contact information for City personnel obtained from any contacts database, address book, or other source provided by the City.
- Be aware of efforts by others to obtain contact information surreptitiously and take steps necessary to protect confidential information.
- Do not use the City's electronic communications assets or systems for any matter that you desire to be kept private or confidential. Privacy cannot be guaranteed. (See related Computer/Electronic Communications/Voice Mail Policy.
- Do not use social media to post or display comments about coworkers, supervisors, or the City that are vulgar, obscene, threatening, intimidating, slanderous, harassing, or a violation of the City's policies against discrimination or harassment.
- Do not post or link to any materials that are derogatory, defamatory, harassing or indecent.
- Do not express personal opinions about customers, residents, or competitors, or offer referrals, endorsements, or recommendations for or about others.
- When relevant, identify your affiliation with the City and your area of concentration.
- Due to privacy, privilege, confidentiality, and document preservation concerns, communicating with customers, residents, or vendors on social networking sites, about legal matters is prohibited. If a customer, resident, or vendor initiates such communication, the individual should advise the customer, resident, or vendor that "due to privacy, privilege and confidentiality concerns, City personnel cannot discuss legal matters on networking sites."

3.4 Blogs. If your blog is self-hosted, use your best judgment and be sure to make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of the City. Write in the first person and use your personal e-mail address (**not your City address**) when communicating via a personal blog.

### 3.5 Personal Matters

- Elected Officials and Managers within the City should refrain from "friending" City employees who report to them.
- Do not provide endorsement or recommendations of current or former City personnel on any web site or in any other context. Any requests for recommendations or endorsements should be directed to the Human Resources Department.

- If you see content on the internet, including on or in social media sites, posted by non-City personnel, that disparages or reflects poorly on the City or its staff, immediately contact the City's Communications Department.

### 3.6 Reliance Upon Information from Social Media

City personnel should exercise caution in searching for and relying upon information from social media for work-related purposes, including with respect to hiring or other employment decisions. This information may be inaccurate or otherwise unreliable or may reveal another individual's protected characteristics (e.g., sexual orientation, age, disability) that must not be considered in hiring or employment decisions. City personnel should use good judgment when evaluating any information from social media to make work-related decisions. The City encourages personnel to seek guidance from Human Resources should they have any questions in this regard.

### 3.7 City Sponsored Media Sites

From time to time, and as communications technology evolves, the City may sponsor websites, blogs, or other media sites. The City must approve any website, blog, chat room, video-sharing site, bulletin board or other social media that promotes the City. The City's Communications Department is assigned the task of creating material for such sites, monitoring content posted by others, including City personnel, or individuals outside the City, and removing content that is considered inappropriate or unacceptable.

When posting on a City sponsored site, avoid topics such as politics and religion and focus on subjects that are business-related. Where relevant, identify your affiliation with the City and your area of concentration.

### 3.8 Violations of this Policy

Due to the importance of this policy, the City cannot tolerate violations. Accordingly, this policy may be enforced through the imposition of discipline up to and including discharge. However, use of social media to engage in lawful concerted protected activity will not be deemed to be a violation of this policy.

4. Application: This policy shall apply to all employees (including full-time, temporary, part-time or Elected Officials) of the City of Monroe.

5. Responsibility: The City Manager or his/her designee will have the responsibility of implementing and overseeing this policy.
6. Administrative Procedure: None.
7. Legislative History of Authority for Creation or Revision:

Adopted pursuant to action of the Monroe City Council, dated July 16, 2018.