

City of Roanoke Social Media Policy

PURPOSE

To address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet and the way residents communicate and obtain information online, city departments may consider participating in social media formats to reach a broader audience. This policy provides reasonable guidelines for online behavior by employees and appointed bodies when participating online on behalf of the City.

As new technology which has applications to Social Media is developed, the Office of Communications and the Department of Technology will review and assess the appropriateness and feasibility for city-related use before departments will be permitted to use the technology. A list of the current city-approved social media outlets, procedures, guidelines, forms, definitions, and examples is available on the city's Intranet Wiki (<http://www.roanokeva.gov/socialmedia>).

POLICY

All use of social media and social networking must be approved by the city's Office of Communications and be in compliance with this policy. The Communication's Office will review social media sites for adherence to this policy for appropriate use and branding consistent with the current guidelines.

1. Use caution when creating social media forums – employees are responsible for what they post and for any online activity conducted with the City's email address and/or which can be traced back to the City's domain, and/or which uses City assets. Any of these would imply actions on the City's behalf and employees will be held fully responsible for all said activities.
2. Obey the law. Departments' use of social media must comply with applicable federal, state, and city laws, policies, and regulations, as well as proper business etiquette.
3. When utilizing social media activities for City business, those activities are considered an extension of the City's information networks and are governed by Administrative Procedures 5.8 – IT Security Policy and Personnel Operating Procedure 26 - Use of Information Assets.
4. Per Administrative Policy 5.8: The use of social media applications at the City is intended to be a resource for employees and business associates for business purposes. All social media applications utilized by City's staff for City business are subject to being read or processed by authorized City management at any time and with no advance warning. The social media, the Internet and public access systems are tools to be used for business purposes whereby an individual's job productivity can be enhanced. Non City of Roanoke business use is prohibited unless otherwise authorized (minor incidental non-business usage).
5. When posting your comments, refrain from posting about controversial or potentially inflammatory subjects, including but not limited to politics, sex, religion or any other non-business related subjects. Never disclose proprietary or confidential information and departments may not change the content of other peoples' sites or postings on such sites or allow others to change any content on city sites, even if such sites usually do permit such modifications. Contact the Communication's Office when in doubt.
6. Outside the workplace - your rights to privacy and free speech protect online activity conducted on your personal social networks with your personal email address. However, what you publish on such personal online sites should never be attributed to the City and should not appear to be endorsed by or originated from the City. If you choose to list your work affiliation on a social network, then you should regard all communication on that network as you would in a professional network. Online lives are ultimately linked, whether or not you choose to mention the City in your personal online networking activity.

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7. Disclaimers:
 - a. For all city-created social media formats open to public opinion:
"As this is an open forum, comments posted by the public do not reflect the opinions of the City of Roanoke. Please contact _____ in case of technical problems."
 - b. Employees who actively participate online, by blogging or posting comments online, may want to add the following disclaimer:
"Views expressed are strictly my own and do not represent the official views of the City of Roanoke and/or the [insert name of department]."

Violation of this policy may result in the removal of information from social media outlets and/or further disciplinary actions. The Office of Communications retains the authority to remove pages or social media content.