

CITY OF PARMA SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

OFFICIAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA



Purpose

The City of Parma (City) recognizes that social media has changed the way the public communicates and obtains information. Further, the City asserts that it has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is “spoken” on its behalf on social media. Considering these changes and interest, the City finds it necessary to adopt a policy to guide the use of social media for official City purposes. This document establishes the City’s primary policy for the official use of social media platforms, channels, sites, and tools by its various departments, offices, employees, personnel, officials, and agents.

Policy

City departments may use social media technologies to enhance communication, collaboration and information exchange with the public and to further their respective missions. The use of social media for official purposes by City departments, offices, employees, personnel, officials, and agents must be in accordance with the guidelines set forth in this document, as well as with all applicable State and Federal laws and regulations including those regarding accessibility, records management, information quality, and intellectual property. City departments may create for themselves additional guidance tailored to specific ends that must align with this policy.

Pursuant to Chapter 5 (“Conditions of Employment”), Section 5.22 (“Corrective Action”) of the City of Parma Personnel Policy Manual, any violation of this Social Media Policy may be cause for disciplinary action by the City, up to and including termination of employment.

Applicability

The requirements and guidelines of this policy apply to all City departments, offices, employees, personnel, officials, and agents. This policy does not govern the personal use of social media by City employees, personnel, officials, and agents for purposes unrelated to their employment or to City business.

Scope

City departments and offices may use only approved social media platforms. Social media platforms that are approved for official use as of the time this policy is adopted are limited to Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Henceforth, the Mayor has sole authority to add to or subtract from this list of approved social media platforms. Any changes to this list must be made in writing, dated, and appended to this policy. All official social media accounts hosted on non-approved platforms that preexist this policy must be deactivated.



Approval and Registration of Social Media Accounts

Official social media accounts must be approved in writing by the Mayor prior to their creation. Approval for the creation and use of official social media accounts is required to ensure: (1) Social media accounts are created and used for proper official business; (2) Alignment of cross-departmental social media efforts; (3) Reduction of duplicative accounts; (4) Information is delivered to the public in a unified manner; and (5) Social media services have an appropriate Terms of Service (TOS) Agreement.

Before any official social media account is created, the head of the City department or office for which the social media account is sought must submit in writing to the Mayor for review and approval a Plan for Social Media Engagement along with the following information: (1) social media platform that will host the account; (2) the specific purpose(s) the account will be used for; (3) account login information (username, handle, and password); (4) account security/recovery Q's & A's; (5) account profile (page name, profile picture, bio); (6) email and telephone number associated with account; (7) name of account administrator(s); and (8) name of person(s) who will be given control over the account. Any change to said account information at any time following approval must be reported in writing to the Mayor within 72 hours of making the change.

Social media accounts, created and hosted on approved platforms, that preexist the adoption of this policy must be registered in writing with the Mayor. Registration of such social media accounts must include a Plan for Social Media Engagement along with the following information: (1) social media platform hosting the account; (2) account login information (username, handle, and password); (3) account profile (page name, profile picture, bio, cover graphics); (4) email and telephone number associated with account; (5) name of account administrator(s); and (6) name of person(s) who have control over the account.

Any change to social media account information referenced above at any time following official approval must be reported in writing to the Mayor within 72 hours of making the change. All social media accounts that do not conform to the approval and registration guidelines set forth herein are subject to immediate suspension and/or deactivation.

Use of Official Social Media Accounts

Only City employees (including part-time, agents, and volunteers) who are properly authorized may access, publish to, or administer a City social media account.

Authorized use of social media accounts must directly support, promote, or enhance the official business of the City. City employees recognize that the content and messages they post on social media websites are public and may be cited as official City statements. City social media should not be used to circumvent other City communication policies, including news media policy requirements.

All official City-related communication through social media, Web 2.0 and social networking outlets must be professional in nature and must always be conducted in accordance with the City's communications policy, practices and expectations. Information must be presented following professional standards for good grammar, spelling, brevity, clarity and accuracy, and avoid jargon, obscure terminology, or acronyms.

Employees may not publish information on City social media, Web 2.0 or social networking sites that includes:

- Confidential, sensitive, proprietary, or classified information.
- Copyright violations.
- Vulgar, profane, racist, sexist, abusive, or derogatory content/language.
- Partisan political views.
- SPAM or commercial endorsements other than promotions of City businesses.
- Solicitation of donations of any kind.
- Personal views or opinions.
- Private business activity.

Moderation of Third-Party Content

City social media sites serve as limited public forums. All content published therein by third parties, including commentary, may be monitored for appropriateness. City employees who have been properly authorized to exercise control over City social media accounts may reject or remove content that:

- is obscene.
- contains personal identifying information or sensitive personal information.
- discriminates against protected classes.
- advertises or promotes a commercial product or service, or any entity or individual.
- promotes or endorses political campaigns or candidates.

The Law Department must be consulted prior to rejecting or removing any content that does not clearly fit within the above-listed categories. In addition, the Law Department must be consulted prior to blocking any user from accessing or commenting on any City social media.

All City departments with a social media presence shall maintain a log of every occurrence that the department has: (1) rejected or removed content from its social media site(s), and (2) blocked users from accessing or commenting on its social media site(s). Such log must contain at a minimum the following information:

- Specific content that has been rejected or removed;
- Actual or online identity of users who have been blocked;
- Social media site from which content was rejected/removed or users have been blocked;
- Date and time when content was rejected/removed or users were blocked;
- Person who authorized rejection/removal of content or blocking of users;
- Person who acted to reject/remove content or block users; and
- Reason for rejecting/removing content or blocking users.

The following disclaimer language must be displayed to users on all official social media sites or made available by hyperlink:

In order to better serve the public, the City of Parma maintains accounts on third-party websites, such as social media sites, as tools for communicating with the public. Submitting personal information (address, telephone number, email address, etc.) is discouraged and is not required to interact with the City's accounts on third-party websites, or to access information on any City social media site.

To protect your privacy and the privacy of others, please do not include your full name, phone numbers, email addresses, social security numbers, case numbers, or any other sensitive or personally identifiable information in your comments or responses. If you have specific questions regarding a City activity or program that involves details you do not wish to share publicly, please contact [INSERT ACCOUNT ADMINISTRATOR NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION].

In addition, your activity on third-party websites is governed by the security and privacy policies of the third-party site. Please note: certain information associated with your account may be made available to us based on the privacy policies of the third-party website and your privacy settings within that website. Each third-party website may have unique features or practices. You may wish to review the privacy policies of the sites before using them in order to understand how the information you make available on those sites will be used. You should also adjust privacy settings on your account on any third-party website to match your preferences.

The views expressed in the comments reflect only those of the comment's author, and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the City of Parma, its departments, or agencies. City "likes" or "follows" of a third-party's social media posts or account should not be considered as City endorsement of that third party.

This site may contain hypertext or other links to external sites that are not provided or maintained by the City of Parma. Please note that we cannot guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of these external sites. In addition, this site may include ads and third-party profiles suggested by the social media platform. The inclusion of these ads, profiles, and links is outside of the City's control. These ads, profiles, and links are not an official endorsement of any product, person, or service, and may not be quoted or reproduced for the purpose of stating or implying City endorsement or approval of any product, person, or service. The City of Parma does not receive any revenue from any of these links or sites.

This City social media site serves as a limited public forum. Users are encouraged to offer comments as they relate to the topics being discussed. We reserve the discretion to reject or remove any comment that:

- *is obscene.*
- *contains personal identifying information or sensitive personal information.*

- *discriminates against protected classes.*
- *advertises or promotes a commercial product or service, or any entity or individual.*
- *promotes or endorses political campaigns or candidates.*

Visitor generated comments (including username and any identifying information provided) on any and all City social media accounts become publicly available pursuant to Chapter 149 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Oversight and Enforcement

All City departments or offices with open social media account(s) will maintain a list of all such accounts that are used by the department or office for official business. This catalogue of active accounts will be given periodically to the Mayor's office for review and to ensure that the list is synchronized with the Mayor's records.

Each City department or office shall appoint a social media account administrator as the primary point of contact who is responsible for managing account security, overseeing employee access and training, and distributing guidance.

Social media accounts created as professional personas for official business (for example an account dedicated to "McGruff the Crime Dog") and using governmental resources are the intellectual property of the City.

City employees should be mindful that inappropriate usage of official City social media, Web 2.0 and social networking sites can be grounds for disciplinary action. If social media, Web 2.0 and social networking sites are used for official City business, the entire City site, regardless of any personal views, is subject to best practices guidelines, and standards.

Employees representing the City through social media outlets or participating in social media features on City websites must maintain a high level of ethical conduct and professional decorum. Failure to do so is grounds for revoking the privilege to participate in City social media sites, blogs, or other social media features.

Records Retention

Any content created or maintained on any City social media site that is related to City business, including communications posted by the City and communications received from private persons and entities, constitutes a public record that is subject to Ohio public records law set forth in Chapter 149 of the Ohio Revised Code.

The Department maintaining a social media site shall preserve records pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule for the required retention period in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible. Furthermore, retention of social media records shall fulfill the following requirements:

- Social media records must be captured in a continuous, automated fashion throughout the day to minimize a potential loss of data due to deletion and/or changes on the social networking site.

- Social media records must be maintained in an authentic format (i.e. ideally the native technical format provided by the social network, such as XML or JSON) along with complete metadata.
- Social media records must be archived in a system that preserves the context of communications, including conversation threads and rich media, to ensure completeness and availability of relevant information when records are accessed.
- Social media records must be indexed based on specific criteria such as date, content type, and keywords to ensure that records can be quickly located and produced in an appropriate format for distribution (e.g. PDF).
- Each employee who administers one or more social networking sites on behalf of the City must have self-service, read-only access to search and produce relevant social media records to fulfill public information and legal discovery requests as needed.

Requests for public records maintained as social media content must be answered completely and accurately by the account administrator for the City department or office that maintains the social media account on which such records are found or kept.

Deactivating Social Media Accounts

No official social media account shall be closed or deactivated prior to the City department or office with control of the account having notified the Mayor in writing of such action. The Mayor must be given written notice of the closing or deactivation of a social media account at least seven (7) days prior to such action.

The City department or office responsible for maintaining a social media account scheduled for closing or deactivation must take appropriate measures to preserve all public records published on the related social media site.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the City of Parma Policy on the Official Use of Social Media. I will comply with the guidelines set forth in this policy and understand that failure to do so may result in disciplinary or legal action.

Signature _____ *Date*

Printed Name _____ *Title/Department*