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**Policy: 2019011**

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## **SOCIAL MEDIA EMPLOYEE USE POLICY**

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to ensure social media tools are used properly by employees of the City of Findlay (“the City”). The City has a business need to augment traditional methods of communication with the use of social media. The use of social media presents opportunity and risk to the City as a whole, and also to individual departments within the City, so it is imperative that employees have a clear understanding of its appropriate use. This policy applies to all employees (full-time, part-time, temporary, seasonal, interns, and volunteers) and contractors hired by the City.

**Note:** As used in this policy, “social media” includes online platforms that facilitate activities such as professional or social networking, posting commentary or opinions, and sharing photos, audio, video or other content. Social media also includes personal websites and online communities such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, Reddit, Tumbler, and SnapChat.

### **GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEES**

The City encourages employees to share information with co-workers and with those outside the organization for the purposes of gathering information, generating new ideas, and learning from the work of others. Social media provides inexpensive, informal, and timely ways to participate in an exchange of ideas and information.

The distinction between public and private, personal and professional, are blurred in online social networks and whatever you post on your personal account can potentially reflect on the City. Therefore, be aware of your association with the City and be thoughtful of how you present yourself online. A personal social media account, while an appropriate place to share personal opinions, is not the place to present an individual opinion as an official City view. Please adhere to the following guidelines when using social media accounts:

1. Refrain from using personal social media accounts for political purposes, to conduct private commercial transactions, or to engage in private business activities during working hours or on City issued equipment. Do not use your City email address to register for social media accounts or other online tools for personal use. Employee social media accounts may be subject to monitoring without notice or consent if the accounts are accessed on City equipment.
2. Do not represent yourself as a spokesperson for the City. An employee’s use and comments made on social media sites are subject to First Amendment protections. However, any personal use must be conducted in such a manner that a reader would not think that the employee is speaking for or on behalf of the City. If an employee publishes a blog or post online related

to the work he or she does or subjects regarding the City, the employee must make it clear he or she is not speaking on behalf of the City. It is best to include a disclaimer such as "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the City of Findlay."

3. Use social media in conformance with relevant portions of federal, state and local laws and regulations, and City policies, including but not limited to, policies regarding harassment and discrimination, confidentiality, ethic rules, and workplace violence. Inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject employees to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
4. Maintain the confidentiality of private or confidential information of the City.
5. Do not use the City's logo, seal, trademark, or graphic without prior written approval.
6. Always be fair and courteous to fellow City employees, citizens, vendors, or others who work on behalf of the City. Also, keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work-related complaints by speaking directly with your co-workers than by posting complaints to a social media outlet.
7. Refrain from posting information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
8. Do not speak to the media on the City's behalf without contacting Mayor Christina Muryn. All media inquiries should be directed to the Mayor.

The City will not take negative action against any employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any employee who retaliates against another for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**For more information**

If you have questions or need further guidance, please contact the HR department.

Director of Law Review



Human Resources Director



Mayor

