



SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT POLICY

2017

POLICY

Purpose of the policy

The following draft social media policy is proposed as a guiding document to provide principles and guidelines that will govern the City's participation in social media. It also provides guidance and protocols and defines roles and responsibilities for the content and administration of the City's social media accounts.

Principles of engagement

City of Monroe is committed to openness and transparency, and the value of engaging stakeholders in meaningful conversations regarding City programs, services and policies. The City recognizes that social media provide valuable opportunities to communicate with stakeholders and provide timely, accurate, and helpful information. Furthermore, the City has an inherent interest in being part of on-line conversations that mention the City in order to enhance the municipality's brand reputation as a public service corporation committed to excellence.

The City supports the following principles in the administration of social media:

- promote engagement and a culture of two-way communication to build trust and relationships
- provide timely, accurate and responsive information
- present a professional, respectful and positive public image
- support transparency and accountability
- provide factually accurate information
- promote approachability and authenticity

In order to reach as many people as possible, the City balances its communications program by engaging in traditional media as well as social media. The primary purpose of social media is to take part in ongoing conversations of interest to the City, disseminate brief messages quickly, provide links for further information, and promote City-sponsored activities.

Suitable Content

Content and conversations on social media should be professional, and intended to inform and engage. Information posted by the City is accurate, relevant and consistent with corporate policies and protocols. Only properly authorized staff (site administrators) will post content and comments on the City's social media sites. Administrators will respect confidentiality and sensitivity of information, including financial and business information, privileged information, legal advice, personal information, home addresses and telephone phone numbers, or any information not generally available to the public.

City participation in social media reflects established municipal values and support the policies, programs and municipal decisions of the City, its public agencies and other levels of government. Site administrators ensure that privacy, confidentiality, copyright and data protection laws are respected.

Unsuitable content

The site administrator monitors all City social media and may remove any post with unsuitable content as described below, and may block/ban users for repeated violations of its social media guidelines. This is stated in the City disclaimer on each site. Some examples of inappropriate content include but are not limited to the following:

- comments that are profane, abusive, threatening, harassing, intimidating, hateful or intended to defame any person or organization
- content considered to be disrespectful or insulting to City staff or representatives
- Content related to non-city related sales, advertising or promotions;
- comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity
- content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, gender identity or sexual orientation
- sexual content or links to sexual content
- content posted by persons whose profile picture or avatar, username or e-mail address contains any of the aforementioned unsuitable content
- solicitations or advertisements, including promotion and endorsement of any financial, commercial or non-governmental agency
- information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public system or any criminal or civil investigations
- messages not supported in the City's current advertising protocol
- comments that are topically unrelated to the issue
- public disclosure of personal and confidential information
- religious and political messages

- promotional messages for personal gain or personal solicitation
- harmful software, viruses, Trojan horses or malware in any form
- data that could reasonably be expected to cause, directly or indirectly, strain on any computing facilities, or interfere with others' use of the service, such as chain letters and mass mailings (spam)
- commercial endorsement or solicitation
- confidential and personal information
- jokes, slurs, or innuendos
- content for the purposes of promoting a candidate for any elected or appointed office
- content that violates intellectual property rights of any other party, existing copyrights or trademarks
- content that contains personal information about an identifiable individual other than the individual posting the content
- Content that is believed to be inappropriate in the opinion of the City of Monroe's Director of Communications.
- Identical posts by the same user (please don't submit over and over expecting the post to show up faster), multiple users (a group of people sending identical messages, or one person submitting under different aliases); in the case of identical posts, we will post the first submission only.

Negative Comments

The City invites all stakeholders and interested parties to share and discuss their opinions provided that all comments remain respectful. The site administrator responds to questions and comments that are consistent with the City's social media guidelines and policy, and does this within a reasonable timeframe.

Some level of criticism is expected, and this presents an opportunity to participate in the ongoing conversation, correct misinformation and deliver service. Negative comments should be responded to using constructive feedback rather than censorship.

It is sometimes appropriate, within the professional judgment of the site administrator, to allow public commentary to take its course without City intervention.

External links

Content that contains links to other external sites are permitted providing they link to:

- committees of Council
- established non-profit or public Monroe organizations recognized by and endorsed by the City
- other governments agencies

- educational institutions

During a municipal election year, links to sites operated by or on behalf of candidates including current members of Council will not be allowed.

Copyright, branding and logos

Intellectual property issues (e.g., copyright, trademark, brand names, logos, moral rights to a work, etc.) exist and must be respected. Proper permission to use others' intellectual property will be obtained prior to usage.

Personal use

The City social media presence is for City purposes only. Outgoing messages of a personal nature will not be posted on the City's social media. Only the site administrator posts City content to City social media sites. Other City employees are not permitted to represent the City on these sites. City employees who participate in conversations on the City's social media sites do so as third party visitors and, as such, are personally responsible for their comments, usernames and information posted.

Administration

Communications staff will serve as the site administrator for the oversight and administration of social media for the City of Monroe. All City activity on social media will be approved by the Director of Communications, in consultation with department heads as required. Login and passwords for the sites are confidential information and will be stored under the supervision of Information Technology at the County.

The site administrator works collaboratively with staff to ensure that information published online about activities is accurate, easy to understand and responsive to public inquiries. The site administrator reserves the right to edit or remove content from City social media sites where it is deemed unsuitable, inappropriate or in violation of this Social Media Policy. The City will retain any content that is edited or removed from a social media site. The time, date and the reason it was edited or removed will be recorded.

Funnel of information

The site administrator relies upon City departments to provide ongoing information as content for keeping the sites up-to-date. The site administrator is responsible for ensuring the clarity and relevance of posted content. Each department will appoint an employee from its full-time staff to

be responsible for online content relevant to that department and to serve as the contact person for new requests.

Privacy Act and Record Retention

Social media content generated by the City are records owned by the City and is a “public” record subject to the rules of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (and other provincial and federal laws). This includes information classes unique to social media, including lists of subscribers and posted comments. Each City site will include in its disclaimer a clear indication that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure. Content that is considered to be transitory records of the City may be deleted/purged from the website as soon as they are no longer needed.

Monitoring

The site administrator will monitor social media sites on an ongoing basis to track conversations and ensure that all content is in compliance with the policy guidelines. Inappropriate content is immediately recorded for record-keeping purposes and deleted.

Disclaimer and Use

Each City social media site will contain a disclaimer such as the example shown below:

PURPOSE

This site is maintained by the City of Monroe for the purpose of providing useful information and relevant dialogue. It is informal and should not be considered official communication from the City. For official information on the City of Monroe and its programs, services and policies, please visit www.monroemi.gov. The views of external participants commenting on this site do not necessarily represent those of the City of Monroe.

City of Monroe’s social media websites are a place for collecting suggestions and new ideas and to encourage conversations among the people it serves, not a substitute channel for services or general questions. Do not submit unsolicited proposals or other business ideas or inquiries through this media; these sites are not to be used for contracting or commercial business.

Do not submit any claim, demand, informal or formal complaint, or any other form of legal and/or administrative notice or process. City of Monroe’s social media websites are not to be used to report criminal activity. If you have information for law enforcement, please contact your local police agency.

ADMINISTRATION

All City of Monroe social media websites are managed by staff or sanctioned agents of City of Monroe during regular business hours Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding statutory holidays. We cannot commit to replying to all comments or moderating all discussions on this site.

Comments or questions submitted after hours or on weekends may be read by staff members or its authorized agents the next business day. Social media websites may occasionally be unavailable and we accept no responsibility for lack of service due to downtime.

CONTENT

All information provided by the City on this site is for information purposes only and is subject to change without notice.

We expect conversations to follow the rules of polite discourse and we ask that participants treat each other, as well as our employees, with respect. For the benefit of robust discussion, we ask that comments remain on topic. This means that comments posted must relate to the topic that is being discussed and/or congruent with the nature of the social media website and its nature of business or service.

This site may also contain information that is posted here by a variety of public sources. Except as otherwise noted, these are the personal responsibility of the persons who post the entries. In no event shall the City of Monroe be held responsible or liable, directly or indirectly, for any damage or loss in connection with the use of or reliance on any posting, content or information provided by another party on this site.

The City expects that participants will treat each other with respect. When you participate at this site, you assume personal responsibility for your comments, your username and any information you provide. We reserve the right, without notification and at our sole discretion, to remove any objectionable content posted by the public. Objectionable content includes, but is not limited to: personal attacks and harassment of any kind; pornography; language that is considered threatening, defamatory, abusive, vulgar, hateful or racist; content that suggests or encourages illegal activity or incites violence. We may delete comments that are spam, are clearly "off topic" or that promote services or products. Comments that make unsupported accusations will be taken out of the discussion. Any individual who repeatedly violates the terms of this policy will be blocked from posting to this page.

The appearance of external links on this page does not represent official endorsement by the City of Monroe.

The City does not accept responsibility for ads, videos, promoted content or comments accessible from any external web site and we do not control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness or completeness of information contained on a linked website. We do not endorse the organizations sponsoring linked websites or the views they express or the products/services they offer.

Users are hereby notified that they are fully responsible for the content they load on this site or any related links. The user is responsible for all copyright and intellectual property laws associated with this content.

Please note that the comments expressed by community members of any City of Monroe social media website do not reflect the opinions and position of the City of Monroe government or its officers and employees. If you have any questions concerning the operation of this online moderated discussion site, please contact jody.egen@monroemi.gov.

ADVERTISING

City of Monroe does not accept advertising on its social media websites, nor does it allow the promotion or endorsement of any business or other entity. City of Monroe may provide information about resources available to the community as it relates directly to its purpose and mission. Any advertising found on a City of Monroe social media website is controlled by the owner of that website and not the City sponsored account holder; City of Monroe does not control what advertising appears on these pages as it is operating on a third-party website not owned or operated wholly by City of Monroe or its departments and agencies.

FOLLOWING OR MEMBERSHIP

Being followed by City of Monroe, Michigan, or an entity of City of Monroe Government, does not imply endorsement of any kind. If you follow any City of Monroe social media website or account, we may or may not follow you back or join your group or network.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube are third party service providers that may collect, store, and manage your personal information whenever you access and use

this site. Please refer to their terms of service and/or privacy statements for particulars.

Note that the City of Monroe has no control over what is done with your personal information. Your personal information is also collected here for the purpose of including your posts on this page and for the purpose of engaging in an interactive dialogue. We reserve the right to reveal identity information in the event of a complaint or legal action arising from any posts. If you have any questions about the City's collection of personal information through this page please contact the Communications staff at 734.384.9134.