

# **CITY OF CYPRESS SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

## **I. PURPOSE**

This Social Media Policy (“Policy”) establishes guidelines for the establishment and use by the City of Cypress (“City”) of social media sites as a means of conveying information to the public.

The intended purpose of City social media sites is to disseminate information from the City about the City’s mission, meetings, activities, and current issues to the public.

The City has an overriding interest and expectation in protecting the integrity of the information posted on its social media sites and the content that is attributed to the City and its officials.

## **II. DEFINITIONS**

“Social media sites” means content created by individuals, using accessible, expandable, and upgradable publishing technologies, through and on the Internet. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, Periscope, and Flickr.

“City social media sites” means social media sites which the City establishes and maintains, and over which it has control over all postings, except for advertisements or hyperlinks by the social media site’s owner, vendors, or partners. City social media sites shall supplement, and not replace, the City’s required notices and standard methods of communication.

“Posts” or “postings” means information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communication posted on a City social media site.

## **III. GENERAL POLICY**

- A.** The City’s official website at [www.cypressca.org](http://www.cypressca.org) (or any domain owned by the City) will remain the City’s primary means of Internet communication.
  - 1. City social media sites shall link back to the City’s official website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business with the City.
- B.** The establishment of City social media sites is subject to approval by the City Manager or his/her designee. Upon approval, City social media sites shall bear the name and/or an official logo of the City or the appropriate department.

1. Whenever possible, City social media sites should clearly state that such sites are maintained by the City and that the sites comply with the City's Social Media Policy.
    - a) The City's Social Media Policy should be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink, when possible.
  2. All City social media sites shall utilize authorized City contact information for account set-up, monitoring, and access. The use of personal email accounts or phone numbers by any City employee is not allowed for the purpose of setting-up, monitoring, or accessing a City social media site.
  3. The City reserves the right to terminate any City social media site at any time without notice.
- C.** The City Manager's Office shall monitor content on City social media sites to ensure adherence to both the City's Social Media Policy and the interest and goals of the City.
1. City social media sites may contain content, including but not limited to, advertisements or hyperlinks over which the City has no control. The City does not endorse any hyperlink or advertisement placed on City social media sites by the social media site's owners, vendors, or partners.
- D.** Employees representing the City on City social media sites shall conduct themselves at all times as a professional representative of the City and in accordance with all City policies. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- E.** City Council Members, Commission and/or Board Members may choose to post and/or comment on various social media sites using their personal accounts. In these instances, it is recommended that the content and tenor of online comments and information posts should model the same decorum displayed during City Council, Commission, Board and community meetings.
- F.** City social media sites shall adhere to applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies.
1. City social media sites shall be managed consistent with the Brown Act. Members of the City Council, Commissions and/or Boards shall not respond to, "like", "share", retweet or otherwise participate in any published postings, or use the site or any form of electronic

communication to respond to, blog or engage in serial meetings, or otherwise discuss, deliberate, or express opinions on any issue within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body.

2. City social media sites are subject to the California Public Records Act. Any content maintained on a City social media site that is related to City business, including a list of subscribers, posted communication, and communication submitted for posting, may be considered a public record subject to public disclosure.

**G.** City social media sites shall comply with usage rules and regulations required by the site provider, including privacy policies.

**H.** The City reserves the right to change, modify, or amend all or part of this policy at any time.

#### **IV. AUTHORIZED USE**

**A.** The City Manager or his/her designee is responsible for determining who is authorized to use social media on behalf of the City.

1. The City Manager or his/her designee will determine the appropriate level of employee access, which includes identifying what social media sites, or types of sites, each department or individual is approved to use, as well as define their respective capabilities: publish, edit, comment or view only.

**B.** Any employee authorized to post items on any of the City's social media sites shall review, be familiar with, and comply with the social media site's use policies and terms and conditions.

**C.** Authorized users shall be provided a copy of this Social Media Policy and are required to acknowledge their understanding and acceptance by signing and dating the last page of this document, and returning the original copy to the City Manager's Office and retaining a copy for their record.

#### **V. CONTENT GUIDELINES**

**A.** The content of City social media sites shall only pertain to City-sponsored or City-endorsed programs, services, and events. Content includes, but is not limited to, information, photographs, videos, and hyperlinks.

- B.** All of the content on City social media sites must be provided to the City Manager or his/her designee for review, approval, and subsequent posting to the social media site.
- C.** Wherever possible, content posted to the City's social media sites should link back to the City's official website for forms, documents or online services and other information necessary to conduct business with the City.
- D.** Any employee authorized to post items on any of the City's social media sites shall not express his or her own personal views or concerns through such postings. Instead, postings on any of the City's social media sites by an authorized City employee shall only reflect the views of the City.
- E.** Postings must contain information that is freely available to the public and not be confidential as defined by any City policy or state or federal law.
- F.** The City shall have full permission or rights to any content posted by the City, including photographs and videos.
- G.** City postings to City social media sites shall NOT contain any of the following:
  - 1. Any personal information, except for the names of employees whose job duties include being available for contact by the public;
  - 2. Comments that are not topically related to the particular posting being commented upon;
  - 3. Comments in support of, or opposition to, political campaigns, candidates or ballot measures;
  - 4. Profane language, sexual content, pornography, obscenity, or links to any such content;
  - 5. Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation/identity, political affiliations, citizenship, marital status, military/veteran status, or national origin;
  - 6. Solicitations of commerce, including but not limited to, advertising of any business or product for sale;
  - 7. Conduct in violation of any federal, state or local law and encouragement of illegal activity;

8. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
  9. Comments on actual or potential legal claims, lawsuits or other legal issues;
  10. Defamatory or personal attacks;
  11. Comments which may reasonably interfere with, inhibit, or compromise law enforcement investigations, police tactics, police responses to incidents and/or the safety of police staff and officers; or
  12. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.
- H.** A comment posted by a member of the public on any City social media site is the opinion of the commentator or poster only, and publication of a comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by the City, nor do such comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the City.
- I.** Comments posted to City social media sites will be monitored and inappropriate content as defined above will be removed as soon as possible and without prior notice.
- J.** The City reserves the right to deny access to City social media sites for any individual who violates the Social Media Policy, at any time and without prior notice.
- K.** The City reserves the right to remove any content posted by the City, or any employee or agent of the City, on its social media sites, when deemed appropriate by the City Manager or his/her designee. This includes, but is not limited to, information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communication that is posted on a City social media site. All users of the City's social media sites acknowledge and agree by signing below that there is no reasonable expectation of ownership, privacy and/or confidentiality for any and all communications posted or made by that employee or agent of the City on the City's social media sites. The City's social media sites are not a public forum for all types of communication. All users of the City's social media sites acknowledge and agree by signing below that content posted on the City's social media sites can be changed or removed by the City for any reason, and that the City shall not be liable for any claim, of any type or kind, for doing so.
- L.** The City reserves the right to implement or remove any functionality of its social media sites at any time and without prior notice. This includes, but is not limited to, information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communication contained on a City social media site.