

**Purpose:**

This document defines the social networking and social media policy for Tulsa City Council staff in addition to City policies. To address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet and the way residents communicate and obtain information online, the City Council may consider using social media tools to reach a broader audience. Council Communications staff encourages the use of social media to further the goals of the City Council and its priorities where appropriate.

City Council uses social media to further the goals of the Council and its priorities with an emphasis on brand integrity in its messages. The City Council's goals in using social media are to:

- Engage citizens at their convenience
- Make it easy for citizens to participate in their local government
- Create a two-way dialogue with the community
- Provide the Council with the ability to communicate effectively

The City Council employs Communications Officers that have overriding interest and responsibility for deciding what is "spoken" on behalf of the Council on social media sites. This policy establishes guidelines for the staff use of social media.

**Personal vs. Professional Guidelines- Council Staff Personal Use**

City Council staff may use social media for personal use and Council staff should comply with City of Tulsa Human Resources' policies, the City charter, Council rules and amendments regarding internet, email, personal computer usage, and prohibited activities. Staff should be mindful as to how their position could be perceived by the public.

Council staff should also comply with City of Tulsa Human Resources' policies regarding their ability to participate in political activities. No Council staff member should cause or permit political activities to detract from or interfere with their ability to perform their job duties. Council staff should not disclose confidential information received in their staff capacity that is not generally known to the public.

**Professional Use**

All official Council-related communication through social media and social networking outlets must remain professional in nature and must always be conducted in accordance with the Council's communications policy, practices, and expectations. Council staff should be mindful of inappropriate usage of official Council social media and social networking sites, such as participating in political activities, conducting private commercial transactions, or engaging in

private business activities. If social media and social networking sites are used for official Council business, the entire Council site, regardless of any personal views, is subject to best practices guidelines and standards.

Only individuals authorized by the Council Administrator, Deputy Council Administrator, or Council Communications Officers may publish content to a Council website or Council social computing technologies. The City Council has established means to communicate “official” information. This communication comes from those designated to speak publicly on behalf of the Council. Only these authorized persons, or their designee, may publish content to an official Council website or social media or social networking site.

**Policy:**

**General**

1. The City Council’s Website, [www.tulsacouncil.org](http://www.tulsacouncil.org), will remain the Council’s primary and predominant internet presence.
  - a. The best and most appropriate Council uses of social media tools fall generally into two categories:
    - i. As channels for disseminating time-sensitive information as quickly as possible
    - ii. As promotional channels to increase the Council’s ability to broadcast its messages to the widest possible audience
2. City Council social media accounts must be content neutral, providing information that is non-editorial and non-political.
  - a. All content on official Council accounts shall be controlled by Council staff which may employ communications professionals to exercise their expertise and best judgment to create a social media strategy using trends, industry standards, and branding and design standards.
  - b. Councilors should direct all comments and inquiries regarding social media accounts and strategies to the Council Administrator and the Deputy Council Administrator.
3. City Council social media sites may be subject to the Oklahoma Records Act. Any content produced or maintained on a Council social media site, including communication posted by the agency and communications received from citizens, may be considered a public record. The department maintaining a site shall preserve records pursuant to the relevant records retention schedule in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily producible.
4. The Council Communications Officers will maintain a list of all City Council social media sites, including login and password information. The Council Communications Officers

shall be authorized, in their sole discretion, to immediately edit or remove content from social media sites.

5. Council staff, including staff providing direct district support and communications officers, may assist with managing, creating, and posting on Councilor and District social media pages and groups provided the pages adhere to the following:
  - a. Posts or shares on behalf of the Councilor or District must not include any information promoting or supporting candidates for elected office or ballot positions. Strictly informational content is permitted, for example, election dates and polling place locations.
  - b. Council staff access in an official work capacity to password protected accounts must cease immediately upon the posting of campaign or ballot content. Note, the public's discourse, comments, or reactions to a post does not define the political intent of the post and shall not impact Council staff's account access.
  - c. Content created by Council staff shall be informational, for citizen engagement purposes, and be non-campaign related.

## **Public Guidelines**

Users and visitors to social media shall be notified that the intended purpose of the site is to serve as a mechanism for communication between the City Council and the public. City Council social media site articles and comments which do not comply with the local, state, or federal laws or those containing any of the following forms for content shall not be allowed:

- a) Obscene language or content;
- b) 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 or sexual orientation;
- c) Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- d) Solicitations of commerce;
- e) Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
- f) Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
- g) Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party; or
- h) Content that promotes violence.

These guidelines must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained, including the time, date and identity of the poster when available.

Council managed social media sites should display the public comment guidelines where possible:

*Welcome to the City of Tulsa City Council's <insert name of social media website>. The purpose of this page is to share information of public interest with residents, businesses, and visitors. It is intended to provide you with the most recent news stories, photos, and videos from the City of Tulsa.*

*If you are looking for the official source of information about the City Council, please also visit our website at [tulsacouncil.org](http://tulsacouncil.org)*

*We value the opportunity for dialogue that <insert social media media> provides and while this is an open forum, it is also a courteous one and we ask that you follow our posting guidelines.*

*City Council reserves the right to remove any comments with obscene language, personal threats, illegal activities, deemed discriminatory or slanderous, or that violate local, state, or federal law. Comments should reflect the topic or subject.*

*We do not allow graphic, obscene, or discriminatory comments or submissions nor do we allow comments that are threatening to anyone or any organization.*

*We do not allow posts that are solicitations or advertisements for commercial entities, spam, or malware.*

*We do not allow comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity.*

*We reserve the right to remove comments that are spam or include links to other sites.*

*You agree to participate at your own risk, taking personal responsibility for your comments, your username, and any information provided.*

*All social media records are retained for legal reasons.*

*This account is maintained by Tulsa City Council staff and does not reflect the views of an individual Councilor.*