



Social Media Policy

PURPOSE

To take advantage of wide-reaching and increasingly effective options for communications, the City of Bella Vista uses social media tools to communicate messages to a broader audience in order to keep the public informed about the services and activities of its government and encourages the use of social media tools to further the goals of the City and the missions of its departments, where appropriate.

The City of Bella Vista has an overriding interest and expectation in assuring the accuracy and consistency of what is "spoken" on behalf of the City on social media sites. This policy establishes guidelines for the use of social media tools for communication between the public and city departments, divisions and staff.

GENERAL

1. All City of Bella Vista department social media sites are subject to approval by Communications staff in consultation with the Mayor.
2. The City of Bella Vista's main website (www.bellavistaar.gov) will remain the City's primary and predominant internet presence.
3. The best, most appropriate uses of social media tools for the City of Bella Vista fall generally into two categories:
 - A. As channels for disseminating time-sensitive information as quickly as possible (example: emergency information).
 - B. As marketing/promotional channels that increase the City's ability to broadcast its messages to the widest possible audience.
4. Wherever possible, content posted using social media tools will also be available on the City's main website.
5. Wherever possible, content posted using social media tools should contain links directing users back to the City's official website for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services necessary to be better informed about services or to conduct business with the City of Bella Vista.
6. Departmental staff will be responsible for the content communicated via social media tools utilized by their department, in coordination with the Communications staff. Department staff is expected to ensure any content communicated via social media tools is maintained and current. Changing information and status updates will be regularly provided to the Communications staff for incorporation in social media posts.
7. The use of social media tools shall comply with all applicable City of Bella Vista policies and standards. Any questions concerning interpretation of this policy should be referred to the Communications Director.
8. The content communicated via social media tools is subject to the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.

9. All social media tools utilized shall contain Terms of Use and Privacy statements that are available via a prominent link on the primary landing page and/or signup/registration page of the tool.
10. Content posted or communicated using City of Bella Vista social media tools, either by city staff or the public, will be monitored. Content containing any of the following shall be immediately removed:
 - A. Comments not topically related to the particular content being commented upon;
 - B. Comments in support of or in opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures;
 - C. Indecent language or profanity;
 - D. Indecent language of a sexual or scatological nature;
 - E. 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;
 - F. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
 - G. Commercial advertising or solicitation of or for private businesses;
 - H. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
 - I. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
 - J. Copyrighted, trademarked or other content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

If posted content does not fall under one of the categories listed in 9(A) through 9(I), it shall not be removed. These guidelines must be included in the Terms of Use statement(s). Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained, including the time, date and identity of the poster, when available.

12. The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this social media policy or any applicable law.
13. All new social media tools proposed for City use will be approved by the Communications Director in consultation with the Mayor.

ADMINISTRATION OF CITY SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

1. The Communications Department will maintain a list of social media tools that are approved for use by City departments and staff, and only employees who have been approved by the Communications Director to post content to social media pages will have administrative access to such accounts.
2. The Communications Department will maintain a list of all City of Bella Vista social media sites, including login and password information. This document of logon and password information is not subject to public disclosure pursuant to an exception included in the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act. The Communications staff will inform the Mayor of any new social media sites or administrative changes to existing sites. Login and password information shall be in the custody of the Communications staff and the IT Manager.
3. The City must be able to immediately edit or remove non-allowed content from social media tools in a manner consistent with constitutional free speech rights of the comment writer.

4. Each social media tool approved for use by the City must comply with city and departmental branding standards and must be operated according to industry best practices regarding various social media platforms.
5. Employees that post to official city social media accounts are presenting the city's and specifically each individual departments' interests, not their own. Employees posting to social media must abide by all city policies and copyright laws, as well as each social media platform's terms and conditions, and must not share confidential city information that is able to be withheld per Arkansas law.
6. Posts that may be construed as controversial should be approved first by the Communications Director before being posted, to ensure the post will not violate any part of the city's own policies on discrimination.