



City of El Campo Social Media Policy

1) Purpose

The use of social media presents an opportunity for the City of El Campo to further its goals of creating a vibrant community for its citizens to live and work. The City has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is “spoken” or published on behalf of the City on social media sites. This policy establishes guidelines for the use of City of El Campo Social Media sites and governs the use, administration, management, monitoring, and retention of social media and social media content consistent with state and federal laws and regulations. In addition, this policy provides guidance to the employees of the City of El Campo concerning their use of social media, as well as their responsibilities with regard to social media and the use of city resources. This policy is intended to mitigate associated risks from use of this technology, where possible.

2) Scope

This policy applies to all interactive Social Media Sites of the City of El Campo, the uses of social media by The City of El Campo employees maintaining, using, or providing oversight of social media tools, and City of El Campo employees and officials interacting on Social Media regarding City-related business. This policy also applies to members of the public who comment or otherwise interact with City of El Campo through its social media websites or platforms.

3) Definitions

- a) **“Employee(s)”** for this policy shall include, but not be limited to sworn and non-sworn full-time or part-time employees, and volunteers.
- b) **“Official(s)”** for this policy shall include elected or appointed City Council Members, Board Members, Committee Members, and Commissioners.
- c) **Social Media Sites or Platforms:** Third party websites or applications which allow for the creation of content and dialogue around a specific issue or area of interest, including, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.
- d) **City Social Media Sites or Platforms (City-wide or departmental):** Those pages, sections, or posting locations in social media that are established or maintained by an employee of the city who is expressly authorized to do so by the City Manager and Public Information Officer within the scope of the employee’s assigned duties and that are used to conduct official city business and/or communicate with the public on city business.
- e) **Social Media Content** includes information, images, or photographs posted or provided to a social media site or platform.
- f) **Social Media Administrators:** City of El Campo employees expressly designated by the City Manager and Public Information Officer to maintain oversight of the City of El Campo Social Media Sites or Platforms (City-Wide and/or Departmental). A Social Media Administrator’s authority is limited to actions that directly reflect guidance from the City Manager, Public Information Officer, and these policies.
- g) **Page:** The specific portion of a social media website where content is displayed and managed by an individual or individuals with administrator rights.
- h) **Post:** Content an individual shares on a social media site or the act of publishing content on a site.
- i) **Speech:** Expression or communication of thoughts or opinions in spoken words, in writing, by expressive conduct, symbolism, photographs, videotape, or related forms of communication.
- j) **City-issued electronic or wireless communication device(s):** Including, but not limited to, phones, tablets, laptop, personal computer and any other device used to send and receive messages, electronic mail, and/or access the internet.

4) Responsibilities

- a) Each Social Media Administrator is responsible for:
 - i) Implementing the provisions of this Policy and ensuring that Employees are aware of this Policy for creating and maintaining City of El Campo Social Media Sites or Platforms;
 - ii) Ensuring that content that is inappropriate or violates this Policy is not posted on City of El Campo Social Media Sites or Platforms established and maintained by the City of El Campo;
 - iii) Ensuring that the approval is sought from the City Manager and Public Information Officer prior to the creation of a(n) El Campo Social Media Site(s) or Platform(s);
 - iv) Ensuring the City of El Campo's Social Media Sites or Platforms are regularly maintained and kept current;
 - v) Reviewing, frequently, information posted to the City of El Campo's Social Media Sites or Platforms to ensure the content is appropriate, professional, and consistent with the purpose for which the Site or Platform exists;
 - vi) Ensuring that City of El Campo - created and any reposted information is consistent with this Policy and that such information is accurate, professionally presented, respectful, relevant, and on topic with the City of El Campo's communication goals, with reasonable care taken to ensure that grammar and spelling are correct, and mistakes are corrected quickly; and
 - vii) Keeping the department supervisor informed of the City of El Campo's communication and outreach goals, as well the available social networking tools and activities.
- b) Each department supervisor is responsible for ensuring that department employees are aware of this policy, adhere to this Policy and shall:
 - i) Review all requests to establish additional official City of El Campo Social Media Sites or Platforms and recommend approval or denial to the City Manager and Public Information Officer.
 - ii) Review all requests to post or generate department-specific content via city-wide or departmental City of El Campo Social Media Sites or Platforms and recommend approval or denial to the Public Information Officer. Social Media Administrators shall review or generate the content for Social Media Sites or Platforms to ensure that they are in compliance with this Policy and El Campo Communication objectives.

5) Policy

a) Creation and Maintenance of El Campo Social Media Site(s) or Platform(s)

El Campo Social Media Sites or Platforms may contain information that represents, or may create the appearance of representing, the City of El Campo's position on policy issues and/or the positions of its leadership. No employee may create or maintain a Social Media Site or Platform that purports to or appears to be a City of El Campo Social Media Site or Platform without the permission of both the City Manager and Public Information Officer. Before any Employee or department representative creates a City of El Campo Social Media Site, an approved request must be received from the City Manager and Public Information Officer. The request must state the purpose of and necessity for the City of El Campo Social Media Site.

Once a City of El Campo Social Media Site or Platform is approved by the City Manager and Public Information Officer, the following information must be recorded with the City Manager and Public Information Officer:

- i) All City of El Campo Social Media Site(s) and/or Platform(s) login and password information (in the case of Facebook, the Public Information Officer must be made an administrator of the site instead of providing the password);

- ii) Any changes to the login and password; and
- iii) The names of any persons who are authorized to access or maintain the City of El Campo Social Media Site or to post City of El Campo Social Media Content (“Administrators”).

At the direction of the City Manager, the Public Information Officer may disable a City of El Campo Social Media Site and prohibit posting of any City of El Campo Social Media Content to a site any time and for any reason, including any violation of this Policy, unprofessional use of this resources, lack of use or misuse by the public, or a failure to maintain the site.

b) Posting on City of El Campo Social Media Sites and Platforms

Employees creating, maintaining, or posting Social Media Content on any City of El Campo Social Media Site:

- i) Must, at all times, conduct themselves as representatives of City of El Campo and in accord with all City of El Campo Personnel Policies and other department or management rules or directives;
- ii) Will follow these guiding principles:
 - (1) Never comment on anything related to legal matters, litigation, or any parties with whom City of El Campo may be in litigation without the approval of the City Manager;
 - (2) Understand that postings are widely accessible, not retractable, and retained or referenced for a long period of time; all content should be carefully considered;
 - (3) Refrain from the expression of personal opinions or positions regarding:
 - (a) Programs or practices of other public agencies, political organizations, private companies, or non-profit groups;
 - (b) Political campaigns; or
 - (c) Religion.
 - (4) Unless the Employee is posting or responding as the Social Media Administrator, the Employee should maintain transparency by using his/her given name and job title and clearly stating the Employee’s role regarding the subject;
 - (5) Use correct grammar and spelling;
 - (6) Avoid jargon;
 - (7) Write and post only about areas of expertise;
 - (8) Keep post factual and accurate;
 - (9) Do not post photographs, submitted by the public, that were taken at City of El Campo-related events held in public places unless you have permission from the photographer;
 - (10) Reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate. When disagreeing with others’ opinions or providing comments, do so in a meaningful, respectful, and relevant manner;
 - (11) Ensure that Social Media Content does not violate another person’s privacy interests;
 - (12) Refrain from posting Social Media Content that is proprietary, copyrighted, attorney-client privileged, subject to state or federal privacy laws, and information not subject to the Texas Public Information Act.

c) Design and Content of City of El Campo Social Media Sites

- i) The following shall be clearly posted on any City of El Campo Social Media Site or Platform:
 - (1) *“The purpose of this site is to present matters of public interest regarding the City of El Campo. We encourage you to submit comments, but please note that this is not a public forum. City of El Campo Social Media Sites or Platforms that permit interactivity with the public through comments or postings are limited forum sites. The City of El Campo reserves the right to delete completely or hide, when necessary and as soon as feasible, any posting unrelated to the purpose and topical scope of the page. By posting to this Site or Platform, you agree to adhere to the posted policies, procedures, and guidelines.”*
 - (2) A clear statement of the intent, purpose, and subject matter of the site, so the public is aware

- of the topical scope of the page;
 - (3) Disclaimer that all content and postings are subject to public disclosure pursuant to the Texas Public Information Act and e-discovery laws;
 - (4) Disclaimer that this site is NOT monitored 24 hours a day;
 - (5) City of El Campo Information email, information@cityofelcampo.org
 - (6) Link to the City of El Campo website, www.cityofelcampo.org
- ii) The City of El Campo reserves the right to delete completely or hide, when necessary, and as soon as feasible, any posting that contains:
- (1) Content that is not topically related to the particular posting by City of El Campo;
 - (2) Content that contains false or misleading information;
 - (3) Content that contains obscene language, sexual content, or links to sexual content;
 - (4) Advertisements or content that is commercial in nature;
 - (5) Content that threatens, defames, or personally attacks any person or organization;
 - (6) Content that promotes, perpetuates, or fosters discrimination on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, color, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, marital status, and/or gender identity;
 - (7) Content that implies, promotes, or encourages illegal activity;
 - (8) Content that opposes or supports political candidates, political organizations, or ballot propositions;
 - (9) Content that is contrary to the safety of City of El Campo employees, the public, or public systems;
 - (10) Content that violates the legal ownership of another party or infringes on copyright, trademark or other intellectual property rights;
 - (11) Links to any site; or
 - (12) Content that is confidential according to the Texas Public Information Act.

Links placed on City of El Campo Social Media Sites or Platforms should only be to a resource on the City of El Campo's website, a City of El Campo-owned website, a state, federal or local government site, an educational website, or an organization with an official partnership or supportive business relationship with the City of El Campo. Exceptions to this rule shall be at the discretion of the Public Information Officer.

d) Use of Social Media by Officials

- i) Due to open meetings requirements, individual members of City Council, Boards, Committees, and Commissions are prohibited from participating in postings or discussion threads on City of El Campo Social Media Sites or Platforms created and maintained by the City of El Campo.
- ii) Unless the official has been designated to serve as a spokesperson, officials should never represent themselves as a spokesperson for the City, the City Council, a City board or commission, City Administration, or any City department.
- iii) From time to time, officials will have access to information that is considered privileged or confidential. Officials must be particularly careful to protect against the disclosure of confidential or privileged information.
- iv) Officials should be honest and accurate when posting information or news, and should quickly correct any mistakes, misstatements and/or factual errors in content upon discovery. Officials should not post or share information known to be false about the City, its employees, constituents, other public officials, suppliers, vendors, or contractors.
- v) Officials are prohibited from deleting posts and related comments regarding any City-related matters to avoid violating the Texas Public Information Act, Chapter 552, Texas Government Code and records retention requirements.
- vi) Officials are prohibited from using social media to engage in any activity that constitutes a conflict of interest as defined by State law or the City Code of Ethics.

- vii) In order to ensure that all individuals or entities receive a fair and neutral resolution of matters considered by the City, and to avoid allegations of favoritism and/or bias for or against any individual, entity or issue, officials are prohibited from making any statements on social media regarding any individual, entity or issue which is reasonably likely to be considered by the body on which the official serves.
- viii) In compliance with Legislative Bill TX SB1893, unless approved exceptions apply, the use or download of prohibited applications or websites, such as TikTok, are prohibited on all city-issued devices.

e) Use of Social Media by Employees

i) Employee Standard for use of Social Media

All uses of social media on behalf of the City of El Campo or in any manner that appears to represent the City of El Campo or constitute communication by the City of El Campo, must comply with the provisions in this Policy, including the following standards:

- (1) No City of El Campo employee may establish any Social Media Site in the name of or on behalf of the City of El Campo unless:
 - (a) The Public Information Officer and the City Manager have both approved the Site; and
 - (b) All information to be posted on the account has been approved by the City Manager and Public Information Officer;
- (2) Social Media Sites or Platforms, established by the City of El Campo, are to be used for City of El Campo business purposes only. Use for communications and postings that are not directly related to the City of El Campo or City of El Campo department business purpose is prohibited;
- (3) Employees must report unauthorized uses of City of El Campo Social Media Sites or Platforms, City of El Campo Social Media Content, and comments or media that violate this Policy to the Public Information Officer and/or City Manager; and
- (4) Employees are expected to be attentive and careful in their use of social media. Employees should be aware that their use of social media may be perceived as representing the City of El Campo and local government and should tailor their use accordingly.

ii) Unacceptable Uses of Social Media by Employee

- (1) Using social media in a manner that does not comply with federal, state, local laws and regulations, and with City of El Campo or department policies;
- (2) In compliance with Legislative Bill TX SB1893, unless approved exceptions apply, the use or download of prohibited applications or websites, such as TikTok, are prohibited on all city-issued devices.
- (3) Using social media in a manner that:
 - (a) Violates copyright, trademark, or other intellectual property rights of any person or entity, or otherwise violates their legal ownership interests;
 - (b) Includes ethnic slurs, profanity, personal insults, material that is harassing, defamatory, fraudulent or discriminatory, or other content or communications that would not be acceptable in a City of El Campo workplace under the Personnel Policy or department policy or practice;
 - (c) Violates the terms of contracts governing the use of any social media content, including, but not limited to, software and other intellectual property license;
 - (d) Displays sexually explicit images, cartoons, jokes, messages, or other material in violation of the City of El Campo sexual harassment policy;
 - (e) Relates to Political Policy or Activity;
 - (f) Contains confidential information that is protected from release pursuant to the Texas Public Information Act or “for official use only” information or information that does or may compromise the security of City of El Campo networks or information systems. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to medical information, social

- security numbers, and other personally identifiable information;
- (g) Violates the terms of use governing third-party websites that allow for the creation of social media sites;
- (h) Violates any Section of this Policy.

iii) Personal Social Media Accounts

This Policy is not intended to govern Employees' establishment or use of personal social media sites for personal purposes, outside the workplace, and using non-City of El Campo City-issued electronic or wireless communication device(s). However, some personal uses of social media may reflect on the City of El Campo or appear to represent City of El Campo policy or to be on behalf of the City of El Campo. In addition, access and use of personal social media accounts by means of City of El Campo City-issued electronic or wireless communication device(s) are subject to City of El Campo policy. For these reasons, Employees are expected to comply with all City of El Campo and department policies, as well as the following standards, when using personal social media accounts:

- (1) Employees of the City of El Campo are discouraged from accessing personal social media accounts while at work. Any use of personal social media at work must be brief and not interfere with performance of the employee's duties or with the workplace. Any brief social media use may not involve commercial or political activities or violate the City of El Campo Personnel Policies and Procedures Handbook.
- (2) City of El Campo employees have no right to privacy with respect to their personal use of social media or personal social media accounts accessed by means of City of El Campo City-issued electronic or wireless communication device(s), or with respect to personal social media content so accessed. Employees should not expect or assume privacy or confidentiality with respect to any such personal social media use or social media content;
- (3) Posts and user profiles on personal social media accounts must not state or imply that the views, conclusions, statements, or other social media content are an official policy statement, position, or communication of the City of El Campo, or represent the views of the City of El Campo or any City of El Campo officer or Employee, unless the Public Information Officer and/or City Manager have previously granted express written permission for that user to do so;
- (4) If an Employee has not received such express written permission, any user profile, biography, or posting on a personal social media account that identifies that person as a City of El Campo employee must include a qualifying statement in substantially the following form: "*The views I express on this site are my own and do not reflect any official view or position of the City of El Campo*";
- (5) Employees may not attribute personal statements or opinions to the City of El Campo when engaging in private blogging or postings on social media sites or platforms;
- (6) Employees shall not post images, files, or text depicting City of El Campo property, equipment, or personnel in any manner that would adversely affect the reputation of the City of El Campo.
- (7) Employees shall not use their City of El Campo email account in conjunction with a personal social networking site.

f) Public Records

- i) City of El Campo Social Media Sites or Platforms create official records that are subject to the Texas Public Information Act and document retention rules of the State of Texas.
- ii) The Public Information Officer shall ensure that the posts on the official City social media accounts are retained in accordance with Texas law.
- iii) Each departmental Social Media Site or Platform administrator shall ensure that posts are retained for their departmental social media account, if applicable.

- iv) Each City Official understands it is their responsibility to submit social media posts subject to the Public Information Act to the Public Information Officer when requested.

6) Exceptions

Exceptions to this policy shall be at the discretion of the City Manager and Public Information Officer.

7) Compliance

Each City of El Campo Department head shall be responsible for enforcing compliance of this Policy by department Employees. An Employee who fails to comply with any aspect of this Policy is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

8) Acknowledgement

On this date, I received the Social Media Policy. I understand it is my responsibility to read and abide by this Policy. I understand that any clarification or explanation of this policy is available at my request from the Public Information Officer or the City Manager. After reading and signing this acknowledgment I will return it to the Personnel Director.

Printed Name: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____