

SOCIAL MEDIA

PURPOSE

The City Council finds that it is necessary to provide a Council Policy to ensure that City of Newport Beach employees and members of its boards, commissions and committees utilize social media technologies properly when communicating on behalf of the City. Social media applications include, but are not limited to, blogs, microblogs, wikis, RSS feeds, podcasts, discussion forums and social networking websites.

Messages and content posted on social media platforms may constitute speech on behalf of the City, but such speech takes place on a non-City venue. Therefore, the City Council finds and intends that speech posted on social media platform venues by City representatives, and comments by the public posted on social media platform venues in response, do not create a public forum or limited public forum on any portion of the City's websites, equipment or other such City property.

A. Usage

The City of Newport Beach's website (<http://newportbeachca.gov/>) shall be the City's primary and predominant internet presence. Use of social media shall only serve as an enhancement to the City's official website. Therefore, information and communications should be organized in a manner that avoids the posting of duplicative or conflicting information.

Social media sites created on behalf of the City of Newport Beach must first be approved by the City Manager's Office and appropriate Department Head.

1. Only those authorized by the City Manager or their Department Head to speak on behalf of the City and convey information regarding City programs, projects, policies or any other such City business on social media platforms may communicate on the City's behalf on the subject of City matters on any social media platform. This includes initiating statements on, or responding to comments received from, various social media outlets in any manner that members of the public might perceive as a statement on behalf of the City of Newport Beach.
2. City employees or members of a board, committee or commission wishing to express their personal points of view on a social media platform may only do so on their own time and are prohibited from utilizing City-owned equipment or technology to participate in social media platforms.

If, on their own time and equipment, a City employee comments about a City matter or issue on a social media platform, they should identify themselves as being affiliated with the City and clearly indicate that their opinions and statements are their own and are not the representations of the City of Newport Beach. City employees shall follow the City of Newport Beach Social Media Guidelines.

3. All use of social media by any City department, board, committee or commission on behalf of the City of Newport Beach must be approved by the City Manager's Office and comply with the following:
 - a. Representatives of the City of Newport Beach utilizing social media shall, at all times, conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner.
 - b. No City employee shall host a blog on any City-owned equipment or website without prior, written consent from the City Manager, Department Director and the IT Division.
 - c. Social media platforms may be accessed from City equipment by City employees only for purposes of work performed in the scope of their employment.
 - d. City departments are responsible for establishing, publishing and updating their pages on social networking websites. It is the responsibility of each to ensure that their content is accurate and current.
 - e. When City departments create pages on social networking sites, all new urls must be shared with the City Manager's Office. Login information, including user identification information and passwords should be provided to the Department Director and the City Manager's Office. Passwords must be secure.
 - f. All social media accounts must be set up with a City email account. Social media accounts must be identified as belonging to the City of Newport Beach.
 - g. When possible, social networking comments and content should contain web links directing the viewer to the City of Newport Beach's official website for more information.

- h. When creating pages or adding content to social media sites, departments should always provide a link to the City of Newport Beach website.
- i. All social networking websites and pages must include the following disclaimer:

The City of Newport Beach's use of external social media websites is provided as a public service. As such, the City of Newport Beach disclaims liability for any and all ads, videos, promoted content or comments accessible from any external web page. The responsibility for external content or comments rests with the organizations or individuals providing them and do not constitute an endorsement by the City of Newport Beach.

- j. No City employee may change the content or add new content to wikis or similar sites on behalf of the City of Newport Beach that relates to City matters including, but not limited to, City projects, programs and policies.

B. Records Retention, Confidential Information

The City of Newport Beach encourages the use of social media to promote increased transparency and efficiency in communicating information to the public. City of Newport Beach correspondence and other records related to transaction of the public's business constitute public records that may be subject to the California Public Records Act, even when transmitted through social media platforms. Departments should maintain records retained in the ordinary course of business consistent with their department's standard records retention schedule.

Some information in City records is confidential, or subject to privileges or exemptions under the California Public Records Act, City ordinances, or state or federal laws. Confidential information, or information exempt from disclosure under the California Public Records Act, shall not be conveyed through social media platforms.

Examples of information that City representatives shall not convey through social media platforms include but are not limited to:

- Attorney-client privileged information;

- Records concerning pending litigation;
- Preliminary drafts, notes and memos not retained in the ordinary course of business;
- Certain information on business license or permit applications;
- Personal identifying information of individuals who file code enforcement complaints; and
- Personal information of City of Newport Beach’s employees not subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act or other state or federal laws (such as home addresses, phone numbers, medical and confidential employment information).

C. Ethical Conduct

No City representative shall participate in any social media activity on behalf of the City of Newport Beach that:

1. Promotes or exhibits hate, bias, discrimination, “adult-oriented” material or material not suitable for viewing by persons of all ages, or material with libelous or otherwise defamatory content;
2. Advocates the agenda or position of a political party, candidate for elected office, ballot initiative, or campaign or fundraising websites of holders for candidates for political office (whether elected or appointed);
3. Posts communications that expressly advocate the approval or rejection of a clearly identified ballot measure or candidate certified to appear on the local ballot;
4. Violates a City of Newport Beach Council Policy, specifically, D-1 (Media Relations), D-5 (City Websites), or any policy contained in the City of Newport Employee Policy Manual, specifically Section 3.0 and Appendix C - Communications Equipment and Systems Policy.
5. Violates any federal or state or local privacy, copyright, trademark, records retention, accessibility or other laws, regulations, policies or standards including but not limited to the First Amendment and the California Public Records Act.

D. Enforcement

1. The City Manager’s Office will monitor all departments’ social media efforts to ensure that content adheres to this policy, is consistent with all

logo usage and style guidelines, and furthers the communication or marketing goals of the City.

2. Any violation of this policy may result in removal of the department's, board's, committee's or commission's content from the social media outlets. The City Manager's Office has the sole authority to determine what information or pages shall be removed.
3. This policy covers the following forms of social media outlets and any other form of social media, new media or Gov 2.0 communication:

Blogs

The word blog is a shortened version of the term web log. Blogs are user-generated websites where entries are made in journal style and appear in reverse chronological order. Blogs provide commentary or news on particular subjects, such as local events. They usually contain text, images and links to other sites. Blogs typically allow visitors to provide comments in an interactive format.

Discussion Forums

A discussion forum (also known as a discussion group, discussion board, message board, or online forum) is a general term for any online "bulletin board" where users can leave messages and view responses to those messages.

Social Networking Websites

Social networking websites focus on the building and verifying of online social networks for whatever purpose. Social networks connect people with all different types of interests. Members communicate by voice, chat, instant message, videoconference and blogs, and the service typically provides a way for members to contact friends of other members.

A. Facebook

Facebook serves as a useful tool for the City of Newport Beach to inform the public about City events, refer them to the City website and dispense information in a timely manner. Guidelines:

- Each department must classify itself as 'government' and identify itself as a department of the City of Newport Beach.

- A link to the City's official website (<http://www.newportbeach.ca.gov>) must be included on the Info Page.
- All City department pages should include other City department pages in their "favorites" section.
- The Comments Section must contain the following disclaimer:

Comments are monitored and the City of Newport Beach reserves the right to remove inappropriate comments, including those that contain obscene language or "adult-oriented" content, threaten or defame any person or organization, violate the legal ownership interest of another party, support or oppose specific political candidates or ballot propositions, promote illegal activity, promote commercial services or products or are not topically related to the particular posting.

- Facebook pages represent the City. Thus, style and design of the Facebook pages shall be consistent to the City branding. Departments must use proper grammar. Slang, jargon, excessive abbreviations shall be avoided.
- Facebook applications must serve a business purpose and first be approved by the City Manager's Office.
- Each department is responsible for archiving its Facebook page. An electronic copy of page content shall be periodically saved to a City Server.

B. Twitter

Twitter serves as a useful tool for the City to communicate information directly to their Twitter followers in 140 characters or less. Guidelines:

- Twitter should only be used as a means to quickly disseminate brief and concise communication. For more-in-depth information, followers should be directed to the City website (<http://www.newportbeach.ca.gov/>).
- Each department is responsible for the archiving of its Twitter posts. Departments shall periodically save an electronic copy of the list of followers and reply messages to the City Server.

C. Photo-Sharing Websites

Photo sharing refers to the publishing or transfer of digital photos online, enabling users to share them with others (whether publicly or privately). This functionality is provided through websites and applications that facilitate the upload and display of images. Please note: All copyright and fair use laws apply.

D. Video-Sharing Websites

Video sharing refers to websites or software programs that enable users to distribute video clips. Some services may charge a fee, but most do not. Please note: All copyright and fair use laws apply.

E. Wikis

A wiki is a website that allows visitors to add, remove, edit and change content. It also allows for linking among any number of pages. Please note: No City representative shall directly change the content or add new content to wikis on behalf of the City of Newport Beach that relates to matters including, but not limited to, City projects, programs and policies. If a representative discovers incorrect information on any wiki, a correction should be suggested in the website's comments section.

F. Podcasts

A podcast is an audio or video broadcast that has been converted to an MP3 file or other audio or video file format for playback in a digital player or computer.

G. RSS Feeds*

RSS (Really Simple Syndication) is the acronym used to describe the de facto standard for the syndication of Web content. Users of RSS content use software programs called "feed readers" or "feed aggregators." Users can subscribe to feeds by entering links to the feeds into a reader program. The reader then checks the user's subscribed feeds to see if any have new content since the last time it checked. If so, the content is retrieved and sent to the user.