



## Social Media Policy

SOP #: 105-4	Revision: 0	Prepared By: DAB
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<p><b>Overview</b></p>	<p>The City of Winona (City) wishes to establish a positive and informative social media presence. City representatives have the responsibility to use the City's social media resources in an efficient, effective, ethical and lawful manner pursuant to all existing City and departmental policies. This policy also provides guidelines and standards for city representatives regarding the use of social media for communication with residents, colleagues and all other followers.</p> <p>This policy applies to any existing or proposed social media websites sponsored, established, registered or authorized by the City. This policy also covers the private use of the City's social media accounts by all City representatives, including its employees and agents, Council members, appointed board or commission members and all public safety volunteers to the extent it affects the City. Questions regarding the scope of this policy should be directed to the City Manager.</p>
<p><b>Definition</b></p>	<p>Social media are internet and mobile-based applications, websites and functions, other than email, for sharing and discussing information, where users can post photos, video, comments and links to other information to create content on any imaginable topic. This may be referred to as "user-generated content" or "consumer-generated media." Social media includes an ever emerging list of new web-based platforms. Some examples include but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, blogs, You Tube, Instagram, SnapChat, etc.</p>
<p><b>Covered Individuals</b></p>	<p>As used in this policy, "employees and agents" shall mean all City representatives, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Employees</li> <li>b. Interns</li> <li>c. Contracted workers</li> <li>d. Members of City Council</li> <li>e. Members of City Boards, Commissions, and Committees (City Groups)</li> </ul>
<p><b>City Sponsored Sites</b></p>	<p>The City Manager and City of Winona department heads will determine, at their discretion, how its social media resources will be designed, implemented and managed as part of an overall communication and information sharing strategy. City social media sites may be modified or removed by the City Manager or department head at any time and without notice, as described in this document.</p> <p>City of Winona social media accounts are considered a City asset and administrator access to these accounts must be securely administered in accordance with the City's Computer, Network Systems, and Telephone Use</p>

	<p>Policy.</p> <p>All social media accounts created and utilized during the course and scope of an employee's performance of his/her job duties will be identified as belonging to the City of Winona, including a link to the City's official web site.</p>
<p><b>Rules of Use</b></p>	<p>No one may establish social media accounts or websites on behalf of the City unless authorized in accordance with this policy.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Department heads or designated City employees with administrator access are responsible for managing City related social media websites including sites requested by employees, City Council or City Groups.</li> <li>b. Departments, City Council or City Groups wishing to have a new social media presence must submit a request to the overseeing department head to ensure social media accounts are kept to a sustainable number and policies are followed.</li> <li>c. All approved sites will be clearly marked as a City of Winona site and will be linked with the official homepage or department page on the City website (<a href="http://www.cityofwinona.com">www.cityofwinona.com</a>). Likewise, the homepage or department page must post a link to the social media site. Department heads are responsible to notify the human resources coordinator of existing and newly created sites for record keeping purposes.</li> <li>d. City social media accounts accessed and utilized during the course and scope of an employee's performance of his/her job duties may not be used for private or personal purposes or for the purpose of expressing private or personal views on personal, political or policy issues or to express personal views or concerns pertaining to City employment relations matters.</li> <li>e. No social media may be used by the City or any City employee or agent to disclose private or confidential information. No social media should be used to disclose sensitive information; if there is any question as to whether information is private, confidential or sensitive, contact the City Clerk.</li> <li>f. When using social media sites as a representative of the City, employees, City Council and City Groups will act in a professional manner. Be aware that content will not only reflect on the writer, but also on the City as a whole, including elected official members of City groups, and other city employees.</li> <li>g. All established social media sites must have the following disclaimer, "Posts to this site will be monitored and subject to removal if deemed inappropriate."</li> </ol>
<p><b>Responding to Posts</b></p>	<p>It is recommended that the Social Media Response Chart in Appendix A be utilized to decide how a post on a City-sponsored site should be responded to if at all. In addition, the following guidelines should be used when responding to a post.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Always keep in mind the appropriateness of content. Never use harassing language (including sexually harassing language) or any other remarks, including insensitive language or derogatory, offensive, or insulting comments or jokes.</li> </ol>

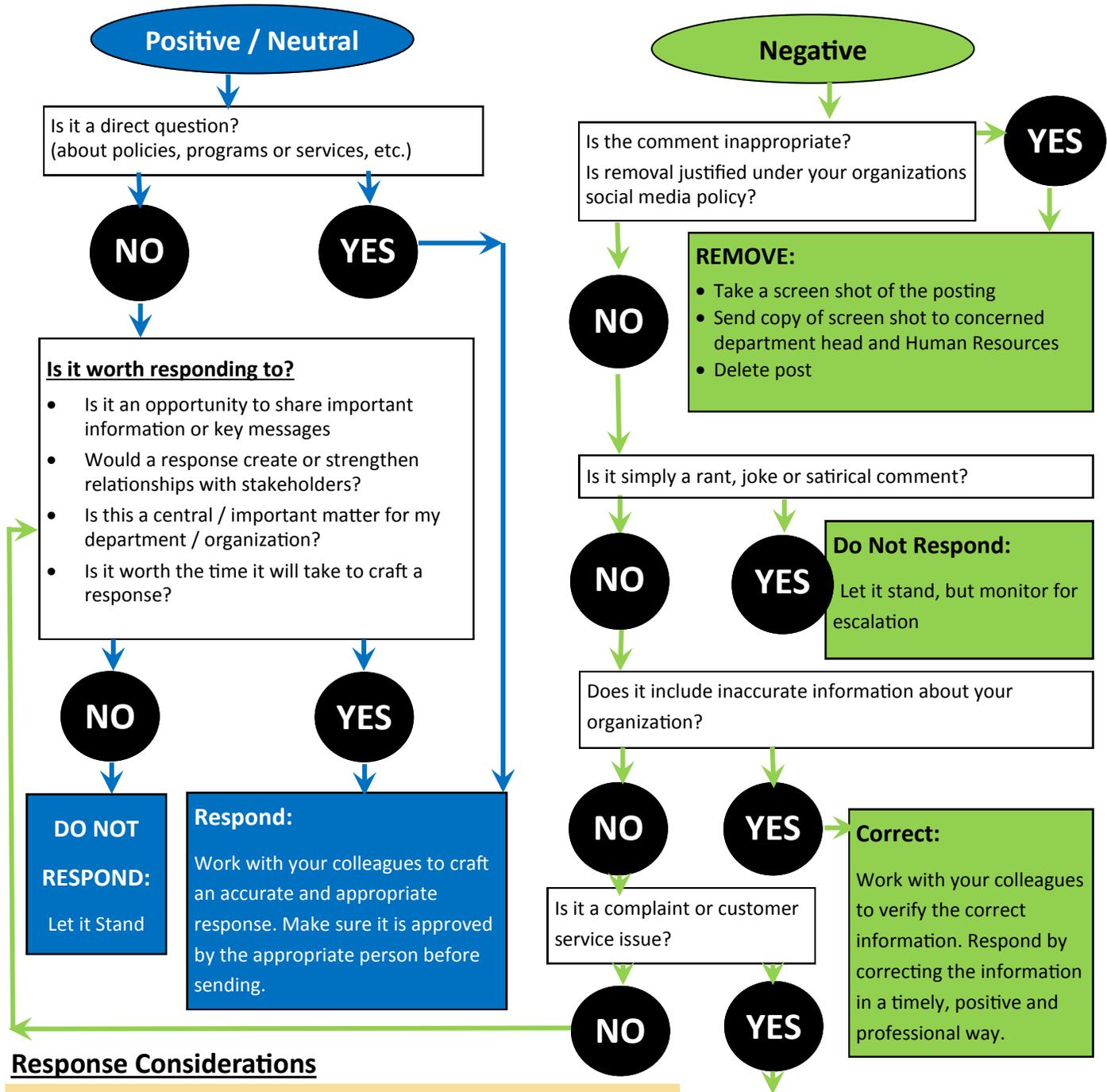
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Never post something you would not want the public to read. Avoid gossip, personal information, swearing, etc.</li> <li>c. Be aware that all content added to a site is subject to open records/right to know laws and discovery.</li> <li>d. Do not provide nonpublic data, private or confidential information about a person, group or ongoing project or use related material as part of any content added to a site.</li> <li>e. When offering recognition of an award or achievement, use only first names and obtain permission from the individual before posting.</li> <li>f. Avoid negative comments on community businesses and their services. Do not post or tag material specific to one entity as part of any content added to a site.</li> <li>g. Do not provide information related to pending decisions that would compromise negotiations.</li> <li>h. Content must comply with any existing code of ethical behavior established by the City of Winona.</li> <li>i. Make sure information is accurate and free of grammatical errors.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Monitoring Posts</b></p>	<p>Comments posted by members of the public on City-sponsored sites will be removed if they are abusive, obscene, defamatory, in violation of the copyright, trademark right or other intellectual property right of any third party, or otherwise inappropriate or incorrect. The following are examples of content that may be removed by City staff before or shortly after being published:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Potentially libelous comments</li> <li>b. Obscene or racist comments</li> <li>c. Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language</li> <li>d. Plagiarized material</li> <li>e. Private, personal information published without consent</li> <li>f. Comments totally unrelated to the topic of the forum</li> <li>g. Commercial promotions or spam</li> <li>h. Material that is not directly related to the discussion</li> </ul> <p>If a post is deemed to have one or more of the criteria listed above, it may be deleted by the administrator or designee using the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take a screen shot of the post</li> <li>2. Send a copy of the screen shot to the department head that oversees the area of concern and the human resources coordinator. The human resources coordinator will archive the copy for record retention purposes.</li> <li>3. Delete the post</li> </ol> <p>Monitoring of posts outside of normal work hours should only be done by exempt employees. Non-exempt employees who monitor and post outside of work hours will not be compensated for incidental time.</p>

	<p>In extreme situations a person may be blocked from commenting to posts. The decision to block a person from commenting to posts or posting new items should be decided by the department head or City Manager. The block may be removed if the individual challenges the decision and initiates interpersonal communication with the department head or City Manager to clarify the City’s position on the egregious nature of the post.</p>
<p><b>Inactivity and Removal of Sites</b></p>	<p>Social media should be updated on a regular basis. Sites not updated or that contain inaccurate information may be subject to deletion as determined by the department head. If a site is deleted, notification should be submitted to Human Resources for record keeping purposes.</p>
<p><b>Data Ownership</b></p>	<p>All social media communications or messages composed, sent, or received on city equipment in an official capacity are the property of the City and will be subject to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. This law classifies certain information as available to the public upon request. The City also maintains the sole property rights to any image, video or audio captured while a City employee is representing the City in any capacity.</p> <p>The City retains the right to monitor employee’s social media use on City equipment and will exercise its right as necessary. Users should have no expectation of privacy. Social media is not a secure means of communication.</p>
<p><b>Personal Social Media Use</b></p>	<p>Employee use shall be compliant with the City of Winona Computer, Network Systems and Telephone Use Policy.</p> <p>City employees, council members, and groups are discouraged from identifying themselves as connected to the City of Winona when responding to or commenting on blogs with personal opinions or views. If an employee chooses to identify him or herself as a City employee, council member or group, and posts a statement on a matter related to City business, a disclaimer similar to the following must be used:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“These comments are my own.”</p> <p>An employee, council member, or group member may establish their affiliation with City of Winona in their personal profile.</p> <p>Occasional access to personal social media during work hours is permitted, but employees must adhere to the guidelines outlined in the City’s Computer, Network Systems and Telephone Use, and Harassment and Workplace Anti-Violence policies.</p> <p>There may be times when personal use of social media (even if it is off-duty or using the employee’s own equipment) may spill over into the workplace and become the basis for employee coaching or discipline. Examples of situations where this might occur include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Friendships, dating or romance between co-workers</li> <li>b. Cyber-bullying, stalking or harassment</li> <li>c. Release of confidential or private data; if there are questions about what constitute confidential or private data, contact the City Clerk.</li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. Unlawful activities</li> <li>e. Misuse of city-owned social media</li> <li>f. Inappropriate use of the City’s name, logo or the employee’s position or title</li> <li>g. Using city-owned equipment or city-time for extensive personal social media use</li> </ul> <p>Each situation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis because the laws in this area are complex. If you have any questions about what types of activities might result in discipline, please discuss the type of usage with the Human Resources Coordinator or the City Manager.</p>
<p><b>Policy Violations</b></p>	<p>Violations of the Policy will subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including discharge from employment or removal from a City board, commission or committee.</p>

# Social Media Response Chart for Posts on City Sponsored Sites

## What is the tone of the post or comment?



### Response Considerations

Keep these things in mind when you're crafting your response:

- Respect Privacy: Don't share or invite others to share personal information on public channels
- Respect Ownership: Cite your sources. If you're sharing or drawing from someone else's information or material, then say so
- Be Credible: Stick to the facts and avoid value judgement
- Be Appropriate: Your tone should be appropriate to the situation and should reflect positively on the City of Winona

### Resolve:

Acknowledge the concern and respect their privacy by inviting them to continue the discussion offline. This could be by phone, email, or other customer service channels, depending on the situation.