



**Cleveland City Council
Social Media Policy and Guidelines for
Public Use**

4/18/2016

Cleveland City Council is participating in social media formats to reach a broader audience, disseminate information and interact with residents and other stakeholders.

We encourage your comments, ideas and suggestions through our social media sites and look forward to an active exchange of ideas. This is a place for collecting suggestions, sharing new ideas and providing constructive criticism relevant to Council programs, services, projects, issues, events or activities. All viewpoints are welcome, but comments should be relevant to the topic at hand, not use profanity, not make unsupported allegations, and should not include spam. Anonymous posting is not permitted on Council social media sites.

Council social media sites are not to be used to report criminal activity or emergencies. If you have information for law enforcement, please contact your local police agency.

Council social media sites do **not** constitute an official form of communication for legal notice, specific requests for service, public records requests, registering a complaint, or filing a claim.

Members of the media are asked to send questions to the Council Communications Office through their normal channels and refrain from submitting questions on Council social media as comments. Reporter questions will not be posted or answered.

Public records: Any content maintained in a social media format which is related to Council business, including a list of subscribers, posted communication, and communication submitted for posting, may be a public record subject to public disclosure.

Council retains the discretion and reserves the right to remove and/or not allow comments(s) to be posted. Council reserves the right to modify this policy at any time and all modifications will be made public. Continued use of a Council social media site following the posting of any modification signifies acceptance of such modification.

Thank you for reviewing the Council Social Media Policy. The following guidelines explain the Council policy in further detail.

I. Posts and Comments

- a. Council social media sites do not constitute an official form of communication for legal notice, specific requests for service, public records requests, registering a complaint, or filing a claim, and are not to be used to report criminal activity.
- b. Members of the media are asked to send questions to the Council Communications Office through their normal channels and refrain from submitting questions on Council social media as comments. Reporter questions will not be posted or answered.
- c. **Council social media content and comments containing any of the following elements are not allowed and will be removed:**
 - i. Profane language or content;
 - ii. 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;
 - iii. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
 - iv. Encouragement of illegal activity;
 - v. Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
 - vi. Posts and comments that promote or advertise private or commercial services, entities or products; and
 - vii. Comments that endorse or oppose any political candidate or ballot proposition.

II. References, Links and Embedded Content Policy

- a. Any references or links to a specific entity, product, service or organization posted by individuals on Council's social media sites should not be considered an endorsement by the Council or its divisions or employees.
- b. Council does not review, sponsor, or endorse any other websites linked to this website. The views and opinions of authors expressed on those websites do not necessarily state or reflect the opinion of the Council and may not be quoted or reproduced for the purpose of stating or implying any endorsement or approval of any product, person, or service.
- c. Council is not responsible for the content that appears on these external links.
- d. Council is not responsible for and does not guarantee the authenticity, accuracy, appropriateness, or security of the link, external website or its content, unless the link goes directly to the Council website.
- e. Council reserves the right to "unfollow" individuals, or delete links posted by individuals, that violate Council's social media policy.

III. Public Records

- a. Subject to certain statutory exceptions, most documents and records maintained by the Council, including but not limited to electronic records, are public records under Ohio law.
- b. Any content maintained in a social media format which is related to Council business, including but not limited to a list of subscribers, posted comments and information submitted for posting, may be a public record subject to public disclosure.
- c. Records Retention:
 - i. Records will be maintained for the required retention period in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible using the approved Council social media platform and tools.
 - ii. Content submitted for posting that is deemed not suitable for posting by a Council moderator, shall be retained pursuant to the records retention schedule along with a description of the reason the specific content is deemed not suitable for posting.

IV. Privacy

- a. All users of Council social media sites are subject to the site's own privacy policy. Council has no control over a third party's privacy policy or their modifications to it.
- b. To protect your own privacy and the privacy of others, please do not include personal information, such as your Social Security Number, phone numbers or email addresses in your comment.

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