



**City of Hampton
PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION**

DATE: May 30, 2018	CHAPTER: 10	PAI No. 2
REFERENCES: Section II	SUBJECT: Social Media Use	

I. Purpose:

The purpose of this procedure is to establish rules for the use of social media.

II. Definition of Social Media:

Social Media refers to any Internet-based software or service that allows users to interact with others via the posting of messages, files, or other content. Current examples include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google Plus +, Tumblr, Instagram, Flickr, Meetup, Snapchat, Next Door and other various blogs, forums, and chat rooms. This also includes forms of online publishing, discussion groups, file sharing, user generated video and audio and virtual worlds. The absence of, or lack of explicit reference to a specific site does not limit the extent of the application of this policy.

III. General Overview:

The City of Hampton supports the use of social media to communicate directly with the public, stakeholders, partners, and the media about City matters of public interest. City use of social media is intended to broaden the reach of communication and engagement with the community, while utilizing new platforms that offer methods of communicating beyond the traditional source of official information located at hampton.gov. All social media should be treated as a formal, public communications tool and should be used to:

- A. Enhance and encourage external communications;
- B. Educate citizens regarding city services, programs, projects, meetings, events and businesses;
- C. Increase government transparency and efficiency;
- D. Engage citizens in community dialogue;
- E. Respond to inquiries regarding municipal services and government in a timely manner;
- F. Share posts from other City departments' or organizations' social media sites to help promote their programs, events and services;

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G. Communicate with citizens during inclement weather, emergencies, and man-made disasters; and

H. Expand citizen interactivity and participation through online services and resources.

IV. Site Creation and Administration:

Requests for the creation of all City and departmental social media sites representing the City shall be submitted in writing by the Department Head for approval by the Marketing and Outreach Department. Approved sites shall be administered by the appropriate City department in accordance with established guidelines provided by the Marketing and Outreach Department. All administrators must attend required Social Media Training as appropriate. Only those employees with administrative access and training may post through a City social media account. Social media accounts on behalf of the City should list an appropriate City email address.

Posting to City Social Media accounts after normal working hours as an administrator is subject to FLSA standards and guidelines. The Marketing & Outreach department may monitor and must maintain an archive of all approved sites and postings that are created.

V. Comments:

Comments from the public are welcome on social media sites but comments must be monitored to ensure they meet certain criteria. City-created social media forums must be structured to focus discussions on a particular interest of the City of Hampton and shall not create a "public forum." City administrators may only remove postings based on the guidelines below, not because a comment disagrees with City policy. All sections of social media sites that allow comments must include either a link to the following comments policy published on the public website or the complete text published on the social media site:

"The purpose of this site is to present matters of public interest in the City of Hampton, including its many residents, businesses and visitors. We encourage you to submit your questions, comments, and concerns, but please note this is a moderated online discussion site and not a public forum. Please note that the comments expressed on this site do not reflect the opinions and position of the City of Hampton, its officers or employees."

Once posted, the City reserves the right to delete the following types of submissions:

A. Vulgar language;

B. Personal attacks of any kind;

C. Comments or content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, genetics, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or intellectual disability or sexual orientation;

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- A. Spam or links to other sites;
- B. Comments which are unrelated to the City matter that is the subject of the post;
- C. Advocate illegal activity;
- D. Promote particular non-City services, products, or political organizations;
- E. Infringe on copyrights or trademarks;
- F. Personally identifiable information that may compromise an individual's financial or personal security. For example medical information, social security numbers, passwords or credit card information; and
- G. Information that may compromise the safety, security or proceedings of public systems or any criminal or civil investigations and/or litigation

Please note that the comments expressed on this site do not reflect the opinions and position of the City of Hampton, its officers or employees.

Comments that do not meet these criteria should be retained then deleted. The City Attorney's office must be consulted before comments are deleted which do not fall clearly into the categories above. Administrators should take screenshots of the original City post and the comment that will be deleted. A description detailing why content was removed or deemed not suitable should be maintained in City files.

VI. Applicable Law and Policies:

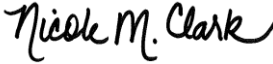
All City and departmental social media sites shall adhere to applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and policies, including the City's Acceptable Use Policy and other applicable City policies.

Virginia Freedom of Information Act and e-discovery laws and policies apply to electronic content and therefore all social media content must be able to be managed, stored, and retrieved to comply with these laws.

Employees representing the City government via social media platforms must conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the City and in accordance with all Human Resources administrative policies.

All City policies, rules, regulations, and standards of conduct apply to employees that engage in social media activities while conducting City business. Use of a City e-mail address and communicating in an official capacity constitutes conducting City business.

All posts and responses to posts made on the City's behalf shall be done through a City account, not a personal one.

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VII. Restricted Material:

Employees shall not write any content or publish posts that involve or are related but not limited to the following examples:

- A. The criteria listed in section 4.0 above;
- B. Potential or actual litigation, including administrative proceedings, involving the City or its employees.
- C. Nonpublic information of any kind.
- D. Illegal or banned substances and narcotics.
- E. Pornography or other offensive illegal materials.
- F. Defamatory, libelous, offensive or demeaning material. Do not engage in a combative exchange.
- G. Private/personal matters of yourself or others.
- H. Disparaging/threatening comments about or related to anyone.
- I. Personal, sensitive, or confidential information of any kind.
- J. Medical information that violates a person's Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) protections.

VIII. City Employees and Social Media:

Use of social media during working hours unrelated to one's job is to be limited to incidental use only. Any incidental use must not interfere with other users' access to resources, must not be excessive and are subject to the City's Standards of Conduct policies.

IX. Personal Use of Social Media:

Personal use of social media on City computers and network resources may not be used in connection with outside work or for the benefit of individuals or organizations not related to the City of Hampton. Use of social media that involves any kind of criminal activity or harms the rights of others may result in criminal prosecution or civil liability to those harmed, or both.

Employees are not permitted to present personal opinions in ways that imply endorsement or opposition by the City. If posted material may reasonably be construed as implying the support, endorsement, or opposition of the City with regard to any personal statements, including opinions or views on any issue, the material shall be accompanied by a disclaimer such as: "the postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent the City of Hampton's positions or opinions."

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X. Social Media Monitoring:

Employees have no expectation of privacy with respect to the actions performed on their City issued devices and/or equipment. Social media access and use involving City equipment and resources are subject to the City's Acceptable Use Policy at all times.

XI. Enforcement:

Any employee found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

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