# City of Joplin Social Media Policy

## Social Media Policy Goal

The City of Joplin's goal for the use of social media is to educate, engage, and increase the public's knowledge, trust, involvement of the City's services. The City promotes the value and importance of ongoing goals and initiatives among governing officials, civic leaders, and citizens of Joplin by providing virtual content to the community. Social media usage supports the City's vision and represents the organization in a positive and professional manner to develop strong public confidence.

## Social Media Policy Purpose

This policy sets forth guidelines for the establishment and use by the city of Joplin of its Social Media sites and public outreach tools (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Website, Electronic Sign, E-mail Blast, Instagram, and any future approved media – hereinafter collectively "Social Media") as a means of conveying City-related information to its residents, employees and visitors. The City of Joplin has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is "spoken" on behalf of the City on its Social Media sites and what information is distributed through its public outreach tools. The purpose of this Social Media and Public Outreach policy is to establish enforceable rules for the use of Social Media by City officers and employees when engaged in City business. These guidelines are necessary to ensure that communications made on behalf of the City are properly authorized and in correct form; that communications from the municipality by means of social media which can be viewed by the public are appropriate and pertinent; that all communications from the municipality is related to the posted municipal information; and that the sender is clearly and fully informed that a message received by means of Social Media is not a substitute for required reporting procedures.

## Social Media Policy Scope

This policy shall apply to all authorized Municipal agencies and departments permitted by the City of Joplin to post on social media sites.

## Section 1: Definitions

- **Approved City Social Networking Site –** Approved City social networking site refers to social networks that the Public Information Office (PIO) and Information Technology (IT) Department have assessed and approved for use by City departments.
- **Post –** An administrator submitted message/blog in the form of, but may not be limited to, text, videos, photographs, graphics, links (hyperlinks), documents, computer applications, etc.

- **Comment –** A user submitted response to an administrator post.
- **Social Media Coordinator** – A designated administrator in each department possessing a Social Media page and who is responsible for planning, implementing and monitoring content.

## Section 2: Authenticity Establishment

City department social media sites shall be created and maintained with identifiable characteristics of an official City site that distinguishes them from non-professional or personal uses.

### 2.1 Site Content

Departments are responsible for establishing and maintaining content posted to their social media sites.

A. Social Media Coordinators shall review site activity on a regular basis for exploitation or misuse.

B. Content posted on authorized City social media sites may be considered public records subject to disclosure under the Missouri Open Records law (RSMo Chapter 610).

C. Following forms of content posted by external and authorized users may be subject to removal if they contain:

a. Profane language or content;

b. Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination of protected classes;

c. Sexual harassment content;

d. Solicitations of commerce or advertisements including promotion or endorsement;

e. Promotion or endorsement of political issues, groups or individuals;

f. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;

g. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;

h. Content intended to defame any person, group or organization;

i. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party, such as trademark or copyright infringement;

j. Making or publishing of false, vicious or malicious statements concerning any employee, the City or its operations;

k. Violent or threatening content;

l. Disclosure of confidential, sensitive or proprietary information;

D. Unacceptable content and repeat individual violators shall be removed. See Section 3 concerning content management and deletion.

## Section 3: Administration and Management of Social Media Platforms

### 3.1 Administration of City of Joplin Social Media Sites

A. The Public Information Office will maintain a list of social media platforms that are approved for use by City departments and staff.
B. All new social media tools proposed for City use will be approved by the Public Information Office and Information Technology.
C. Departments wishing to create and use a social media account for City business must submit a request to, and receive approval from, the Public Information Office and Information Technology.
D. A department will have only one account on each of the social networks, unless otherwise approved by the Public Information Office and Information Technology.
E. Each page relative toe City of Joplin content and ran by a City administrator shall publicly indicate that the City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law.
F. Departments will inform the Public Information Officer of any account or administrative changes to existing department social media sites, including termination of an account.

**3.2 Administration of Department Social Media Sites**

A. As is the case for City websites, departmental staff will be responsible for the content and upkeep of any social media sites their department may get approval to create. Department directors must designate an employee/s to administrator its social media account/s and submit the employee's name and extension to the Public Information Office.
B. City employees serving as social media managers will be provided with, and must adhere to, the City's social media use policy, the City's standards for each social network he/she will be managing.
C. All City of Joplin social media sites shall comply with all appropriate City of Joplin policies and standards listed in the Employee Handbook, including but not limited to:

a. Email policy
b. Internet Use Policy
c. Employee Social Media Policy
d. Social Media Guidelines for City of Joplin employees

**3.3 Corrections – Removing Content or Comments**

A. Removing content or comments if it is determined that content previously posted by a City social media manager should be removed, consult with your Department Director or Public Information Officer. If a decision is made to remove previously posted content, it is strongly recommended to explain to constituents why you are removing the content.
B. City social media managers may not remove comment postings simply because they may be critical of the City or City officials. If user content is positive or negative and in context to the conversation, then the content should be allowed to remain, regardless of whether it is favorable or unfavorable to the City. If the content is

offensive, denigrating and/or completely out of context, then the content should be rejected and removed according to the City's official comment policy for that specific social platform.

a. Under the terms of offensive content, offensive posts will first be hidden by content administrators. It is recommended that the administrator provide a response to creator of the post to explain why their respective comment was hidden.

b. If offensive content is submitted repeatedly to a City of Joplin post or page, that post is subject to removal and may result in a possible ban of the persons commenting or posting the content.

C. In the event that a City administrator questions the policy violation of a post, that administrator shall consult with the greater social media administration team prior to the removal of content. If a decision is not met within the internal group, the content in questions will be submitted for legal review.

***This social media policy may be revised at any time.***

***Revised August 11, 2021***