



Title: Social Media Use Policy
Policy #: 2016-001
Sponsored By: Administrative Services Department
Approved By: Town Manager
Date: **Issued:** 07/18/16 **Amended:** __/__/__

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Establish a Social Media Use Policy (“Policy”) dictating the creation, maintenance and use of Town of Windsor (Town) social media sites as a means of conveying government speech/information to its residents, citizens, partners, stakeholders, staff and the general public about the Town and its mission, meetings, services, projects, programs, activities, public amenities and emergencies. The Town has a compelling government interest to protect the integrity and accuracy of the information posted on its social media sites and the content that is attributed to the Town and its Officials.

DEFINITIONS

Department: A department, division, office, commission, committee, board, or other organizational unit created by the Town.

Designated Staff: Town employees including full-time staff, part-time staff, temporary staff, staff designee, officers, elected or appointed officials, volunteers, and designated contractors or consultants authorized to post and establish Social Media presence at the Department program level.

Libel: A false and unprivileged publication by writing, printing, picture, effigy, or other fixed representation to the eye, which exposes any person to hatred, contempt, ridicule, or obloquy, or which causes a person to be shunned or avoided, or which has a tendency to injure a person in his or her occupation.

Non-Designated Staff: Town employees including full-time staff, part-time staff, temporary staff, staff designee, officers, elected or appointed officials, volunteers, and contractors or consultants not authorized to post and establish Social Media presence at the Department program level.

Post/Posting: Announcements, articles, pictures, videos, or any other form of communication posted on a Social Media site that endorses or sponsors a product, service, viewpoint, or content.

Public Record: A document, book, paper, photograph, file, sound recording or machine readable electronic record, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made, received, filed or recorded in pursuance of law or in connection with the transaction of public business, whether or not confidential or restricted in use (Cal. Gov. Code §6250 et seq.).

Social Media: Websites, applications, online or other electronic means of communication that enable users to create content, share content, message or participate in social networking.

Social Media Application: Prior to establishing or substantially revising a Town Social Media Site, Departments must obtain approval in accordance with the Social Media Application. The application form includes a two-step approval process, first for concept and second for final approval.

Speech: An expression or communication of thoughts or opinions in spoken works, in writing, by expressive conduct, symbolism, photographs, videotape or related forms of communication.

Staff: Full-time, part-time, and temporary employees, and elected or appointed officials of the Town or their designee. This category does not include Vendors (defined below).

Town Manager: Equivalent to Town Manager or his or her designee.

Town Social Media Site: Social Media sites, pages or links for the purpose of disseminating governmental speech/ information to which the Town establishes, maintains, or controls postings, except for advertisements or hyperlinks by the Social Media site's owners, vendors, or partners. Postings to Town Social Media Sites shall supplement but not replace the Town's required and/or legal notices and standard methods of communication.

Vendors: Includes third party vendors, consultants, contractors or others who provide professional services to the Town.

Website Link Policy: Policy established for linking to external websites for the Town to provide information to the public regarding services available to the public from Town government, as well as information regarding services available from other governmental agencies and nonprofit and private organizations in partnership with the Town in which are complementary to and in support of the services provided by the Town.

SCOPE

The Social Media Use Policy applies to all Town employees, officers, elected or appointed officials, volunteers, and designated contractors or consultants who, as part of their job responsibilities or duties, are authorized to provide information on behalf of

the Town in their official or professional capacity or are engaged in the maintenance, participation, and observation of any Town Social Media site defined herein.

This policy also provides guidelines for employee's personal use and restrictions related to Social Media in circumstances when there is a nexus between the employee's personal use and the Town. Additional guidelines are found in the Town's Personnel Policies and Procedures, Section 24, Use of Information and Electronic Systems.

OWNERSHIP

All Social Media communication messages that meet the following criteria are the property of the Town:

- Communication on a Town Social Media Site.
- Communication that is composed, sent, or received on Town-owned IT equipment.
- Communication between Staff and a Vendor acting in an official capacity for the Town on equipment that is not owned by the Town.

The Town does not endorse any links, advertisements or postings on Town Social Media Sites that have been placed by the site owners, their vendors, partners or other parties, including the public.

RESPONSIBILITY

Following are the responsibilities of each party pertaining to Town Social Media Sites:

- Administration of Town Social Media Sites
Departments will prepare and maintain their own Departmental procedures regarding Social Media usage to address responsibilities and issues specific to their Department operations. Such procedures must be approved by the Town Manager prior to use, must not conflict with the Social Media Use Policy, Website Link Policy, and must not conflict with the Town's compelling governmental interest to protect the integrity and accuracy of information posted on the Department's Town Social Media Sites and the content that is attributed to the Town and its officials.

The daily maintenance, monitoring, upgrading and all other post-implementation activities related to a Town Social Media Site is the responsibility of the Department which established the site.

- Town Manager
For the purpose of ensuring that Town Social Media sites and accounts protect the integrity and accuracy of the Town's governmental speech/ information, the Town Manager and/or designee will provide general oversight of the Town's use of Social Media. To that end, the Town Manager and/or designee will monitor

content on Town Social Media Sites to ensure adherence to both this Policy, Website Link Policy, and the Town's interests and goals. The Town Manager and/or designee must be able to immediately access and control content from all Town Social Media Sites and accounts.

The Town Manager has the authority to appoint Staff or Vendors as Designated Staff or Designated Directors to any Town Social Media Site.

- Department Directors

Within the terms of this Policy and Website Link Policy, Department Directors will have the authority to appoint Staff or Vendors as Designated Staff to be responsible for the Department's portion of the Site.

Directors will be given access information to any Town Social Media Site the Department is responsible for, and must provide this information to the Town Manager immediately upon receipt, whether it is the creation of an account or resetting access information such as login or passwords.

In order to protect the integrity and accuracy of governmental speech/information, Directors may add, edit, maintain or remove content from any Town Social Media Sites the Department may create. Comments posted by the public will not be edited or removed based on viewpoint expressed, but may be edited, removed or hidden based on inconsistency with the Content Standards stated in this Policy.

- Designated Staff

All Designated Staff shall review, be familiar with, and comply with the Town's Social Media Use Policy, Website Link Policy, the Town Social Media Sites' use policies and terms and conditions or other related guidelines issued by the Town Manager. Designated Staff must submit proposed content for Town Social Media sites to the Department Director or designee for review and approval before posting.

Postings on any Town Social Media Site by Designated Staff shall only reflect the views or concerns of the Town. Designated Staff acting in the course of his or her job duties to post on Town Social Media Sites must communicate only approved Town messages and shall not share personal views or personal information about themselves, other Staff or any other persons. Designated Staff must conduct themselves at all times as professional representatives of the Town and in accordance with all Town policies.

Designated Staff has no First Amendment right of free expression when performing their official job duties relating to Town Social Media Sites.

Any postings made by Designated Staff on a Town Social Media Site will be viewed by the public as coming from the Town and therefore shall be consistent with the accepted Town messaging, voice, accuracy, and integrity.

Designated Staff posting on Town Social Media Sites may also be subject to more restrictive terms defined by the Town in other policies, procedures or documentation.

Designated Staff must inform their Director, or the Town Manager in the event of no Department Director, of the account information including URL, login, password, or applicable information needed to access, edit or delete the Town Social Media Site or any pertinent information on the Site. This information must be shared prior to making the change or immediately following the change.

- Non-Designated Staff

Non-Designated Staff does not have the authority to Post on behalf of the Town. Non-Designated Staff may not post any matter on any social media site in any manner that expressly or implicitly indicates that the content of the post is Town-endorsed, Town-approved, or the official voice of the Town.

POLICY

The Town will utilize Town Social Media to further its compelling governmental interests to:

- Engage, build relationships with, and provide useful and accurate information to the Town's residents, citizens, partners, stakeholders, staff and the general public regarding Town-sponsored or endorsed programs, services or activities;
- Build awareness of the Town's mission, vision and values by providing relevant, accurate, and timely information and opportunities for interaction regarding Town-sponsored or endorsed programs, services or activities;
- Promote, recruit, and implement the Town's marketing and branding strategies; and
- Offer governmental services. The Town may change this Policy at any time.

The Town will expand visibility and outreach through Town Social Media Sites by:

- Increasing credibility with the public by posting relevant, accurate information and offering transparency.
- Building affinity and creating a media presence that positively promotes the Town, its Departments and services offered.
- Increasing opportunities for engagement with the public.

- Disseminating time-sensitive or emergency information timely, efficiently and consistent with applicable Town policies and in accordance with the rules and regulations of other applicable agencies, groups or organizations.
- Increasing and unifying internal communications and engagement with Staff and Vendors.

Requirements

The establishment and use by any Department of a Town Social Media Site is subject to approval by the Town Manager. Users shall not have an expectation of privacy or confidentiality; Social Media is not a private means of communication, but is owned by the Town and is to be used for disseminating the Town's governmental speech and information only.

- The Town's website (www.townofwindsor.com) is the Town's primary and predominant internet presence.
- All Town Social Media Sites shall be listed on the Town's website to assist the public in identifying the Town's official sites.
- Where appropriate, Social Media presence should be in an interactive format, utilizing "Follow Us" or "Like Us" buttons.
- The advertisement or marketing of any outside vendor's website or brand on the Town's Social Media site must comply with the Website Link Policy and need prior approval by the Town Manager.
- All Town Social Media Sites shall comply with usage rules and regulations provided by the site provider, including privacy policies.
- The Town Manager reserves the right to suspend or terminate any Town Social Media Site. A Department will be notified by the Town Manager if its site has been or will be suspended or terminated.
- The Town Manager must first approve a Town Social Media Site prior to making the Site live. Any Staff that makes a Site live prior to receiving approval from the Town Manager may be subject to disciplinary action.
- Any Town Social Media Sites established prior to creation of the Social Media Use Policy must receive approval from the Town Manager to keep the Site live. Each Department is required to comply with the Social Media Application requirements in order to obtain the appropriate approval from the Town Manager. Designated Staff must submit the application no later than 90 days following the issue date of this Social Media Use Policy.

- If the Social Media Use Policy criteria are amended, Designated Staff must submit a Social Media Application in accordance with the new Policy requirements no later than 90 days following the amended date of the Social Media Use Policy. This requirement may be waived by the Town Manager in his/her discretion.
- Designated Staff shall conduct themselves at all times as professional representatives of the Town and in accordance with all Town policies. This includes any Town or Department policies that have specific language governing expressions, display of Town images or Town logos, posting and use of Department records.
- For each Town Social Media Site approved for use by the Town Manager, the following documentation and procedures will be adopted:
 - The Town Manager will maintain a Master list of Town Social Media Sites and any external links that are approved for use by the Department and Designated Staff, including login and password information, so the Town Manager can readily access content on the sites.
 - Department Directors will immediately inform the Town Manager of any changes to account log-ins, passwords, or other administrative information regarding existing Town Social Media Sites, both in writing and in advance of making any changes.
 - Designated Staff will immediately inform the Department Director, or the Town Manager in the event of no Department Director, in writing and in advance of making any revisions to an approved Town Social Media Site.

Establishing or Revising a Town Social Media Site

Prior to establishing or revising a Town Social Media Site application that has been approved, the Department must obtain approval in accordance with the Social Media Application. The application includes a two-step approval process, first for concept and second for final approval.

- Conceptual Plan: Staff must route a Social Media Application with the conceptual plan of the proposed Town Social Media Site to the primary Designated Staff, primary Department Director and then the Town Manager for final approval. The purpose of the conceptual plan is to:
 - Provide a brief overview of the Town Social Media Site being proposed.
 - Confirm that the proposed Town Social Media Site adheres to this Policy and Website Link Policy for appropriate use of governmental speech/information and message consistency with the policies, goals, mission, vision and values of the Town.

- Confirm proposed assignment of Designated Staff responsible for creation and administration of the proposed Site and the Director responsible for oversight of the Site and Designated Staff.
- Provide the Department Director and Town Manager with their first opportunity to provide feedback on changes to the concept and direction of the Town Social Media Site requested.
- Request any additional detail on related topics or items not previously included in the conceptual plan to ensure incorporation in the final comprehensive plan.
- Final Plan: A Social Media Application with a detailed plan of the proposed Town Social Media Site shall be routed from the Department Director to the Town Attorney and then to the Town Manager for final approval. The objective of the final plan is to:
 - Provide a detailed plan for a new or revised Town Social Media Site.
 - Ensure the Town Social Media Site compliments the Town and Department's governmental speech/information, mission, goals, audience, legal risks, technical capabilities, security issues, emergency response procedures, etc.
 - Assign all Designated Staff that will be responsible for adding, editing, monitoring, maintaining, and removing content from the Town Social Media Site and define their specific role(s) and expectations.
 - Assign Directors, as appropriate, that will be responsible for oversight of the Town Social Media Site and define their specific role(s) and expectations.
 - Confirm approval of the terms and conditions for establishing an account using a new Town Social Media Site that has not already been designated as an approved Town Social Media Site.
- Exceptions: Depending on special circumstances, the following exceptions may apply:
 - In the event of an emergency or disaster when immediate action is required and the Town Manager, Department Director, Town Attorney or designee is not available, Designated Staff may access a Social Media site not previously used by the Town for the purposes of maintaining public safety or law enforcement confidentiality. In these cases, Designated Staff are exempt from providing advance notice or obtaining advance from the Director, Town Manager and Town Attorney, but must

concurrently inform those individuals of the emergency access and actions taken.

- The conceptual plan may be bypassed only if the request is in accordance with the exemption instructions provided in the Social Media Application or with prior written approval from the Town Manager.
- The final plan may be bypassed only if the request is in accordance with the exemption instructions provided in the Social Media Application or with prior written approval from the Town Manager.

Following final approval from the Town Manager, a Town Social Media Site shall be created or updated only with official Town contact information for account administration, monitoring, and access. The use of personal email accounts or phone numbers by any Designated Staff is prohibited on any Town Social Media Sites. Additionally, account information for the site must be shared with the Department Director and Town Manager, immediately following creation of a new account or prior to changing an existing account.

Content Standards to Protect the Accuracy and Integrity of Governmental Speech/Information

In order to protect the accuracy and integrity of the Town's governmental speech and information, the following content standards apply to Town Social Media Sites to enable the Town to serve all its constituents in a fair and unbiased manner.

- Where appropriate, content posted to the Town Social Media Sites will also be available on the Town's official website.
- Where appropriate, content posted to the Town Social Media Sites should contain links directing users back to the Town's official website for further information and services.
- Links directing users to advertisement or marketing of an outside vendor must comply with the Website Link Policy and need prior approval by the Town Manager.
- Users, Designated Staff, and visitors to the Town's Social Media Sites must be notified via a "Terms of Service Agreement" that the intended purpose of the site is to serve as a means of communication between Town Departments and members of the public regarding Town-endorsed or Town-sponsored services, programs, and activities. All comments posted to the Town's Social Media Sites will be monitored by the department assigned the specific Social Media page.
- Designated Staff must include his or her official job title and Town contact information on postings to Town Social Media Sites.

- Any Town Social Media Site which accepts posts from the public will include the following disclaimer:
 - *“This is an official Town of Windsor [insert name of Social Media site – i.e.: Twitter, Facebook, blog, etc. page/account] that is used to foster and protect the accuracy and integrity of the Town’s governmental speech and interests in Town-endorsed or Town-sponsored events, services or activities. Visit our Town of Windsor web site (Town of Windsor website is a link) for more information about the Town of Windsor. This site is intended to facilitate accurate communication between the public and the [insert Town / Department] on the listed topics, and to further the [Town / Department’s] mission to protect and serve the public. The Town disclaims any and all responsibility and liability for any materials that the Town deems inappropriate for posting. Any direct posts to this page are limited to the purpose of this Social Media Site to provide accurate governmental information regarding Town-sponsored or Town-endorsed events, activities or services and may not contain:*
 - *Profane, obscene or violent language or content;*
 - *Sexual content or links to sexual content;*
 - *Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation, military and veteran status, or other protected characteristics;*
 - *Business solicitations or commercial activities;*
 - *Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;*
 - *Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public infrastructure or systems;*
 - *Libelous or defamatory comments;*
 - *Retaliation, harassment or bullying*
 - *Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party (e.g., copyright or trademark);*
 - *Confidential Town information, as defined by any Town policy or state or federal law*

- *Private or personal information published without consent;*
- *Attorney-client privileged information;*
- *Attribute personal statements, opinions, or beliefs to the Town;*
- *Comments not related to the original topic, or containing random or unintelligible information; and*
- *Comments in support of, or in opposition to, any political candidate, political viewpoint, political campaign, ballot measure, or proposition.*

By posting a comment, the individual(s) or group(s) making the Post agrees to indemnify the Town, its Staff and Vendors from and against all liabilities, judgments, damages, and costs (including attorneys' fees) incurred by any of them which arise out of or are related to the content posted. If the Post does not conform to these standards, the individual(s) or group(s) should not use a Town Social Media Site because posting contrary to these standards may lead to legal liability."

- The Town's content standards shall be displayed to users on the Town's website and made available by hyperlink on all Town Social Media Sites.
- Any content removed, based on these standards, must be retained in Town files and shall include the time date of posting and identification of the poster, when available, and shall include the reason the content was removed.
- Wherever possible, all Town Social Media Sites shall adhere to applicable federal, state, local and Town laws, regulations, policies and standards, including but not limited to:
 - Ralph M. Brown Act (Cal. Gov. Code §54950 et seq.)
Town Social Media Sites shall be managed consistent with the Ralph M. Brown Act. Members of the Town Council and all Town Commissions and committees shall not respond to any published posting, or use the Town Social Media Sites or any form of communication to respond to, blog, or engage in serial meetings, or otherwise discuss, deliberate, or express opinions on any issue within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Council or applicable Commissions or committees.
 - California Public Records Act (Cal. Gov. Code §6250 et seq.)
Town Social Media Sites are subject to the California Public Records Act. Any content maintained in a Social Media format that is related to Town business, including posted communications, and communications submitted for posting, may be deemed public records subject to public

disclosure. Wherever possible, such sites shall clearly indicate that all articles, comments and other content posted or submitted for posting, as well as personal identifying information for users and visitors to the site, may be retained by the Town and may be subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act. Requests for disclosure should be directed to the Town Clerk's office.

- California Records and Information Management Program

California state law and relevant Town records retention schedules apply to Social Media sites and content. Unless otherwise addressed in a specific Social Media standards document, the Department maintaining a Town Social Media Site will preserve records required to be maintained pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule for the required retention periods on a Town server in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible.

- The Town reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this Policy or any applicable law.

Staff Use of Social Media

Staff is permitted to discuss wages, hours and working conditions on Social Media Sites, during non-work time and while using personal (not Town-owned) equipment.

Staff use of Social Media sites during work and personal time may be monitored by the Town for consistency with: this Policy; the Town's Personnel Policies and Procedures Use of Information and Electronic Systems; or any other applicable laws or regulations when any one of the following circumstances is present:

- Staff posts any reference, either general or specific, about the Town on any Social Media site in any manner that indicates or suggests that the content of the post is Town-sponsored, approved or endorsed.
- Staff accesses or posts on a Social Media site with the use of Town-owned equipment.
- Staff accesses or Posts on a Social Media site during their scheduled work time.

Any misuse of Social Media by Staff that occurs in any of the above circumstances, however, is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action. Examples of misuse include, but not limited to, the following:

- Accessing, viewing, sharing or posting illegal, false, defamatory, misleading, malicious, proprietary, harassing, libelous, hostile, obscene, pornographic, or offensive content.
- Disclosing confidential or non-public Town information.

- Using any Town logos, trademarks, or branding.
- Staff uses Town-email addresses to register on social media sites that staff uses for personal purposes.
- Use of Social Media that interferes with Staff's ability to timely conduct daily job responsibilities at the Town.
- Attributing personal statements, opinions or beliefs to the Town

Investigating Misuse

The Town's Human Resources Division will manage any investigation into alleged misuse of Social Media in a confidential manner, except that confidentiality may be limited by the need to fully investigate or as required by law.

Retaliation against employees who report misuse or a violation is prohibited.

The Town has discretion to determine whether to conduct an investigation, taking into account the seriousness of the issue raised, the credibility of the concern and the likelihood of confirming the allegation.

Disciplinary Action

All Staff shall be provided a copy of the Social Media Use Policy and shall, prior to engaging in or continuing any activities described hereunder, sign an acknowledgement of receipt of this Policy and an agreement to comply herewith.

Any employee who violates the Social Media Use Policy in any manner may be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with applicable Town's Personnel Policies and Procedures, up to and including oral reprimand, written reprimand, suspension with pay, suspension without pay, or termination from employment.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & RECEIPT OF THE TOWN OF WINDSOR
SOCIAL MEDIA USE POLICY**

I hereby acknowledge all of the following:

1. I have received a copy of the Town of Windsor’s Social Media Use Policy.
2. I have read and I understand all provisions specified in this Policy and understand that a copy of this acknowledgement will be placed in my personnel file.
3. I agree to comply with all provisions in this Policy.
4. I understand that violations of this Policy may subject me to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Employee Signature

Date

Print Name

Department

Human Resources Representative

Date



Social Media Application

In accordance with the Social Media policy, prior to establishing or substantially revising a Town Social Media Site, Departments must obtain approval in accordance with the Social Media Application. The application includes a two-step approval process, first for concept and second for final approval.

Step 1 – Conceptual Plan

Project Title	Department
Application (Facebook, Twitter, Blogger, etc.)	
Brief Overview (No more than 150 words)	
Designated Staff Assigned	
Requested By	
Department Director	
Feedback	
Signature	
Town Manager	
Feedback	
Signature	

Step 2 - Final Plan

Mission / Goals	
Audience	
Risks & Mitigation	
Estimated Time Requirements per Week	
Technical Requirements	
Security Issues & Mitigation	
Emergency Response Procedures	
Other (please specify)	

	Name	Add Content	Edit Content	Remove Content	Monitor Postings	Maintain Account
Designated Staff Roles & Expectations		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with Social Media Use Policy and Town Guidelines. • Reflect view and concerns of the Town, void of personal commentary. • Submit content for approval prior to posting. • Inform Department Director of any pertinent change to account access including URL, user names, passwords, etc. prior to or immediately following any change. 					
Director(s) Roles & Expectations	Name	Department				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with Social Media Use Policy and Town Guidelines. • Responsible for Department's portion of the site. • May appoint designated staff. • Ensure access information is maintained and forwarded to Town Manager. • To protect the integrity and accuracy of governmental speech/information, may add, edit, maintain or remove content. 					
Implementation Timeline						
Fiscal Impact						
Account URL						
<input type="checkbox"/>	Department procedures attached to address responsibilities and issues specific to operations					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Account information provided to Department Director and Town Manager (login, password, etc.)					
Submitted By						
Authorizations						
Department Director						
Town Attorney						
Town Manager						