

# CITY OF MARSHALL SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

## **Purpose**

The City of Marshall has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is “spoken” related to the City through the use of social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube). This policy establishes guidelines for the establishment and use of social media by the City as means of conveying information about the City and its events and activities to its residents.

The intended purpose behind establishing City of Marshall social media sites is to disseminate information from the City, about the City, to its residents.

Nothing in this policy shall be applied to prohibit or infringe upon any communication, speech or expression that is protected or privileged under law. This includes speech and expression protected under state or federal constitutions, as well as labor laws or other applicable laws.

## **General Policy**

City social media sites should make clear that they are maintained by the City of Marshall.

The City of Marshall’s website at marshalltexas.net will remain the City’s primary and predominant Internet presence. Wherever possible, City social media sites should link back to the official City of Marshall website for forms, documents, online services, and other information necessary to conduct business with the City of Marshall.

Department-designated social media administrators will monitor content on social media sites to ensure adherence to the interest and goals of the City of Marshall.

This Policy must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink.

The City will approach the use of social media tools as consistently as possible, enterprise-wide.

All social media sites shall adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies.

City social media sites are subject to the Texas Public Information Act. Any content maintained in Social Media format that is related to City business, including posted communication, and communication submitted for posting, is public record subject to public disclosure. For Open Records Act requests, please contact the City Clerk’s office with a request in writing.

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

## **Comment Policy**

As a public entity, the City must abide by certain standards to serve all its constituents in a civil and unbiased manner. Comments or content containing any of the following inappropriate forms of content shall not be permitted and are subject to removal and/or restriction by the City:

1. Profane, obscene, violent, or pornographic language and/or content;
2. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, sex, gender identity or expression, marital status, status with regard to

public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, covered medical condition, sexual orientation, military or veteran's status, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law;

3. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
4. Solicitations of commerce not related to agency business, including but not limited to, advertising of a business or product for sale and other pure commercial speech;
5. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
6. Comment in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures;
7. Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems or employees;
8. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party;
9. Content that does not pertain to City business;
10. Defamatory or personal attacks; or references to or inappropriate characterizations of individuals including personal attacks upon any member of the public, City employee or City official;
11. Threats of violence or any other harmful act directed to any person, or persons, group, or organization;
12. Content not related to the subject being discussed, including random or unintelligible comments;
13. Personal matters;
14. Conduct that is in violation of any federal, state, or local law; and
15. Individually identifiable information (e.g. address, phone number, social security numbers, pictures of individuals or their family members) of specific individuals be they City employees, officials or members of the public.

Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained by the sponsoring department for two years in accordance with the Texas State Records Retention Schedule, including the time, date and identity of the poster, when available. Upon removal of content, the Administrator shall notify the commenter that their response has been deemed inappropriate and removed due to inconsistency with the City's content requirements.

A comment posted by a member of the public on any City of Marshall social media site is the opinion of the commentator or poster only, and publication of a comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by, the City of Marshall, nor do such comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the City of Marshall.

### **Terms of Service**

Each type of social media maintains a "Terms of Use" agreement. All comments posted to any City social media site are bound by these Terms of Use and the City reserves the right to report any user violation.