

**CITY OF MONROE  
RESOLUTION NO. 011/2019**

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF  
MONROE, WASHINGTON, ADOPTING THE CITY OF  
MONROE USE OF CITY'S SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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WHEREAS, this policy establishes guidelines and responsibilities for the City employee's use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Nextdoor, Instagram, and Twitter; and

WHEREAS, this policy provides procedures for conduct by City employees who use social media on behalf of the City; and

WHEREAS, this policy is not intended to address employee's personal use of personal social media account.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MONROE, WASHINGTON, HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Adoption of the City of Monroe Use of City's Social Media Policy. The City of Monroe Use of Social Media Policy is adopted in its entirety and attached as Exhibit A.

Section 2. Effective Date. The City of Monroe Use of City's Social Media Policy will be effective May 14, 2019.

ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Monroe, at its regular meeting thereof, and APPROVED by the Mayor this 14th day of May, 2019.

Approved: May 14, 2019  
Effective: May 14, 2019

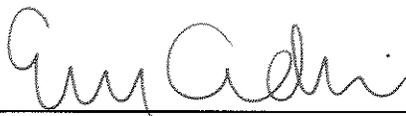
CITY OF MONROE, WASHINGTON

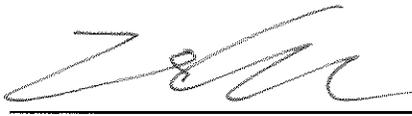
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Geoffrey Thomas, Mayor

(SEAL)

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Elizabeth M. Adkisson, MMC, City Clerk

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
J. Zachary Lell, City Attorney

**CITY OF MONROE**

**POLICY SUBJECT:** Use of City's Social Media

**REFERENCE NUMBER:** #2019-020

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVED:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_ City Administrator

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**RECEIVED:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Police

\_\_\_\_\_ Human Resources

\_\_\_\_\_ Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_ Public Works

\_\_\_\_\_ Finance

\_\_\_\_\_ City Attorney

\_\_\_\_\_ Community Dev.

\_\_\_\_\_ Parks and Recreation

**With the exception of the Content and Use Standards for Public Comments (below), the statements contained in this policy are guidelines and summaries. They do not bind the City of Monroe. The City reserves the right to change, revoke or make exceptions to city policies at any time and at its sole discretion.**

**Purpose of Policy**

This policy establishes guidelines and responsibilities for the City employee's use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Nextdoor, Instagram, and Twitter. Additionally, this policy provides procedures for conduct by City employees who use social media on behalf of the City. This policy is not intended to address employee's personal use of personal social media account.

**Use of Social Media Platforms**

- Social media provides an effective manner in which to communicate with many citizens. Social media platforms can provide important tools to help the City disseminate time-sensitive information in a quick and efficient manner, including emergency situations. The platforms are also effective tools for communicating with residents, supporting City activities, and promoting our community.
- If a social media platform does not comply with federal, state, and local law applicable to the platform, or if the platform does not allow the City to comply with federal, state, and local law applicable to the City, the City will not use or authorize use of the platform.

### **Initiation of City Social Media Accounts**

- No City Department may create a social media account that purports to represent or speak for the City or any part of the City unless the Department Director obtains prior approval from the City Administrator and the IT Department.
- No City employee or group may use a Departmental account without approval from their Department Director or Director's designee.

### **Purpose of Social Media Platforms & Limitations on Forum**

- The purpose of City-maintained social media pages and accounts is to communicate with members of the public about City administration, City services, and policy matters that are within the realm of City action.
- Given this purpose, social media pages and posts created by and for the City create limited public forums for the purpose of discussing City administration, City services, and policy matters within the realm of City action. As such, the City may restrict the content of its social media pages to matters that are germane to the purpose of the page or post, so long as these restrictions are narrowly tailored to maintain the purpose of the forum and do not discriminate against users or speech based on viewpoint.

### **Content and Use Standards for Public Comments:**

- The City of Monroe invites dialogue with the public, and the public is welcome to post comments on social media pages or accounts maintained by and for the City.
- In order to comply with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA); comments from children under the age of thirteen (13) will not be allowed. Those 12 years old and younger may contact the City via email instead. In using or commenting on City social media pages or posts, users acknowledge that they are at least 13 years old. If the City has reason to believe that a public commenter or user is under 13, the content posted by the commenter or user will be considered inappropriate contact and will be subject to being hidden or removed.
- Members of the public may not post material on the City social media pages that is:
  - Not relevant to the purposes of forum (i.e., discussion of City administration, City services, and policy matters that are within the realm of City action);
  - Defamatory and posted maliciously (i.e., the poster knows or recklessly disregards the fact that the material is defamatory and false);
  - Personally abusive;
  - Obscene or sexual;
  - Threatening to the point that it would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety; or
  - Intended to incite unlawful activity.
- Comments that are critical of the City or its policies but that do not violate these content standards are free speech and should not be hidden or removed.
- City staff shall immediately report content that violates the content standards for public comments to the City Administrator or designee. The City Administrator or designee will make the decision whether to hide or remove the comments or content.
- Content removed from social media sites based on a violation of this policy will be recorded by the City, including time, date, identity of the author (if available), the name

of the staff member who removed the comments or contents, and the reason for removing the comments or content.

- Removed content may be subject to public disclosure and will be maintained by the City's social media archiving platform.

### **Content Standards for City-Posted Content**

- City accounts may not be used to post content involving or related to:
  - Litigation or matters that are reasonably likely to lead to future litigation;
  - Private, sensitive information of any kind;
  - Violations of copyright, license agreements, or other intellectual property laws;
  - Promotion or advertisement of any political campaign or ballot measure;
  - Promotion of illegal activity; or
  - Promotion or solicitation for an outside organization or group, unless authorized by the Mayor or City Administrator. However, posts or links involving private organizations or business that sponsor City events or activities or otherwise support the City's economic development, tourism promotion, or community activity are allowed.
- Nothing in this section prevents City support of or connections with other public agencies, non-profit or charity organizations, or the news media.
- Social media sites will use approved names, official titles, and the City logo on the main page whenever possible.
- Employees should not include personally identifiable information on social media, including, but not limited to Social Security numbers, personal phone numbers, email addresses or home addresses.
- In order to protect public safety in cases including but not limited to sex offender notification or wanted individuals, City accounts may be used at the discretion of the City Administrator, Police Chief, or designee to alert the public to individuals who endanger public safety in accordance with the provisions of RCW 4.24.550.

### **Public Records**

- Content published on social media pages will be retained and managed by departments in compliance with records retention policies and Washington state recordkeeping requirements.
- Departments should set all privacy settings on social media pages to public.
- Social Media shall be archived in a social media archiving system. In instances where it is not possible, every City Department or group should be prepared to treat each comment, post, photo, and list of individuals connected to a social media site as an open record. Do not assume third-party platforms such as Facebook and Twitter will keep accurate records of your content—they are under no obligation to do so.
- Because City records personnel do not necessarily monitor social media pages, requests for public records made over social media do not give the City sufficient notice that a public records request has been made pursuant to Chapter 42.56. RCW. Therefore, requests for records made over social media should not be processed as public records requests. If members of the public seek records via social media, staff should direct the public to the City's public records portal.
- Every City user of City social media accounts and pages should keep in mind that social media accounts used for City business, including personal accounts, may be

subject to the Public Records Act (RCW Ch. 42.56), even if the work was done on personal time and equipment.

### **Public Notification**

- Every City social media page must provide the following notice to users:

This page is a limited public forum. The Purpose of this forum is to communicate with members of the public about City administration, City services, and policy matters that are within the realm of City action. Content on the page will be removed if it is:

- Not relevant to the purposes of forum;
- Defamatory and posted maliciously;
- Personally abusive;
- Obscene or sexual;
- Threatening to the point that it would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety; or
- Intended to incite unlawful activity.

All content posted on the page is subject to public disclosure. Requests for records submitted via social media will not be processed as requests for public records under Chapter 42.56 RCW. If you would like to make a public records request, please visit the City's public records page for instructions on submitting your request: <https://www.monroewa.gov/147/Requesting-Records>.

### **Customer Service**

- Departments are responsible for managing customer service inquiries for their departments. The City will make every effort to respond to comments as appropriate within one business day. The City should respond to comments in the same medium they were made in. For example, a question on Facebook should receive a reply on Facebook. If the Department does not know the answer, a simple response of "Thank you for your comment. We will look into this issue and get back to you shortly" is appropriate.

### **Privacy and Security:**

- City Social media passwords shall not be the same password used in employees' personal accounts.
- Passwords should be changed immediately after the password or site accessed using the password has been or is suspected of being compromised. Departments must also change passwords immediately if personnel are removed as administrators or leave employment.

### **Updates and Maintenance:**

- Social media platforms must be updated regularly to ensure information is current, accurate and useful. Individual departments are responsible for maintaining their

sites, which includes viewing and updating content. Every effort should be made to update content at least weekly.