

Section I - Purpose

To support the City's goals and objectives, City of Hagerstown departments, boards, commissions, and City-affiliated neighborhood groups may utilize social media and social network sites to further enhance communications with various stakeholder organizations. City officials and City organizations have the ability to publish articles, facilitate discussions and communicate information through various media related to conducting City business. Social media facilitates further discussion of City issues, operations and services by providing members of the public the opportunity to participate in more ways.

Section II – Policy

1. All City of Hagerstown social media sites shall be (1) approved by the Director of Information Technology and the requesting Department Head; (2) reviewed by City's Communication Manager; (3) published using approved City social networking platform and tools; and (4) administered and monitored by the Department of Information Technology or their designee. Designees can be any department employee designated by the requesting Department Head that has a complete understanding of this policy and has appropriate technical experience.
2. All City of Hagerstown social networking sites shall adhere to applicable state, federal and local laws, regulations and policies including all Information Technology and Records Management City policies and other applicable City policies.
3. Freedom of Information Act laws and policies apply to social media content and therefore content must be able to be managed, stored and retrieved to comply with these laws.
4. City of Hagerstown social networking sites are subject to applicable Maryland public records laws. Relevant City of Hagerstown records retention schedules apply to social networking content. Records required to be maintained pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule shall be maintained for the required retention period in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible using the approved City platforms and tools.
5. All social network sites and entries shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure.
6. Content submitted for posting, shall be deemed not suitable for posting by a City of Hagerstown social networking moderator because it violates the "User Guidelines", (attachment "D"), shall be subject to removal by the City.

7. The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law.
8. Each City of Hagerstown social networking site shall include an introductory statement which clearly specifies the purpose and topical scope of the blog and social network site. Where possible, social networking sites should link back to the official City of Hagerstown Internet site for forms, documents and other information.
9. City of Hagerstown social networking content and comments containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed/posted and are subject to removal by the City:
 - a. Comments not topically related to the particular site or blog article being commented upon;
 - b. Personal attacks of any kind;
 - c. Profane language or vulgar content;
 - d. Prejudicial remarks or a comment that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
 - e. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
 - f. Solicitations of commerce; promoting any goods/services or links to other sites;
 - g. Advocating, conducting, supporting or encouraging illegal activity of any kind;
 - h. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
 - i. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party or infringe on copyrights or trademarks;
 - j. Supports particular services, products or political organizations/ideas;
 - k. Promotes events or activities that are not sponsored by the City;
 - l. Contains personal information such as address, birth date, medical information or social security number;
 - m. Contains political endorsements of any particular candidate for office, electioneering or a particular stance on specific legislation;
 - n. Contains any items violating the Maryland Public Information Act.

Repeated violations of posting inappropriate comments, as defined above, will subject the author to removal from the City's Social networking site.

10. All City social networking moderators shall be trained regarding the terms of this City of Hagerstown policy, including their responsibilities to review content submitted for posting to ensure compliance with the policy.
11. All social networking sites shall clearly indicate they are maintained by the City of

Hagerstown and shall have City of Hagerstown contact information prominently displayed.

12. Where appropriate, City Information Technology security policies shall apply to all social networking sites and articles.
13. Employees representing the City government via social media outlets must conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the City and in accordance with all human resource policies.
14. Employees found in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

ATTACHMENT A. Definitions

For the purpose of this City of Hagerstown Social Media Policy, the following terms are defined as provided below:

1. **Social Media:** Social media is content created by individuals using accessible and scalable technologies through the Internet. Examples of social media include Facebook, blogs, MySpace, RSS, YouTube, Second Life, Twitter, LinkedIn, Delicious, Flickr, etc.
2. **Blog:** (an abridgment of the term web log) is a City of Hagerstown website with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video.
3. **City of Hagerstown author:** An authorized City of Hagerstown official that creates and is responsible for posted articles and information on social media sites (“article”).
4. **Article:** An original posting of content to a City of Hagerstown social media site by a City of Hagerstown author.
5. **Commenter:** A City of Hagerstown official or member of the public who submits a comment for posting in response to the content of a particular City of Hagerstown article or social media content.
6. **Comment:** A response to a City of Hagerstown article or social media content submitted by a commenter.
7. **City of Hagerstown moderator:** An authorized City of Hagerstown official, who reviews, authorizes and allows content submitted by City of Hagerstown authors and public commentators to be posted to a City of Hagerstown social media sites.

ATTACHMENT B. Blog Standards

Comments submitted by members of the public must be directly related to the content of the articles. Submission of comments by members of the public constitutes participation in a limited public forum. City of Hagerstown blog moderators shall allow comments that are topically related to the particular article being commented and thus within the purpose of the limited public forum, with the exception of the prohibited content listed in the User Guidelines in Attachment "D".

Author and Commenter Identification

1. All City of Hagerstown blog authors and public commentators shall be clearly identified. Anonymous blog postings shall not be allowed.
2. Enrollment of public commentators shall be accompanied by valid contact information, including a name, address, and email address.

Ownership and Moderation

1. The content of each City of Hagerstown blog shall be owned by and the sole responsibility of the department producing and using the blog.
2. Documents and articles submitted to a City of Hagerstown blog shall be moderated by an authorized and trained blog moderator.

Blog Comments & Responses

1. All blog articles and comments shall be reviewed and approved by an authorized blog moderator before posting on a City of Hagerstown blog.
2. All blog articles and comments submitted for posting with attached content shall be scanned using antivirus technology prior to posting.
3. The linked content of embedded hyperlinks within any City of Hagerstown blog articles or blog comments submitted for posting shall be evaluated prior to posting. Any posted hyperlinks shall be accompanied by a disclaimer stating that the City of Hagerstown guarantees neither the authenticity, accuracy, appropriateness, nor security of the link, web site or content linked thereto.

ATTACHMENT C. Employee Guidance for Participating in Social Networking

The City of Hagerstown understands that social networking and Internet services have become a common form of communication in the workplace and among stakeholders and citizens. Social networks are online communities of people or organizations that share interests and/or activities and use a wide variety of Internet technology to make the interaction a rich and robust experience. Employees that choose to participate in social networks as a City employee should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. City policies, rules, regulations and standards of conduct apply to employees that

engage in social networking activities while conducting City business. Use of your City e-mail address and communicating in your official capacity will constitute conducting City business.

2. City employees shall notify their supervisor and the IT department if they intend to create a social networking site or service to conduct City business.
3. Departments have the option of allowing employees to participate in existing social networking sites as part of their job duties. Department Heads may allow or disallow employee participation in any social networking activities in their departments.
4. Protect your privacy, the privacy of citizens, and the information the City holds. Follow all privacy protection laws, i.e., HIPPA, and protect sensitive and confidential City information.
5. Follow all copyright laws, public records laws, retention laws, fair use and financial disclosure laws and any others laws that might apply to the City or your functional area.
6. Do not cite vendors, suppliers, clients, citizens, co-workers or other stakeholders without their approval.
7. Make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the City of Hagerstown. If you publish content on any website outside of the City of Hagerstown and it has something to do with the work you do or subjects associated with the City, use a disclaimer such as this: "The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent the City's positions or opinions."
8. Do not use ethnic slurs, profanity, personal insults, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the City's workplace. Avoid comments or topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.
9. If you identify yourself as a City employee, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to colleagues, citizens and other stakeholders.
10. Correct your mistakes, and don't alter previous posts without indicating that you have done so. Frame any comments or opposing views in a positive manner.
11. Add value to the City of Hagerstown through your interaction. Provide worthwhile information and perspective.

ATTACHMENT D. User Guidelines for all Facebook pages

NOTE: The information on this page shall be on each City of Hagerstown Facebook page.

Welcome to this City of Hagerstown Facebook page. We welcome your participation, but ask that you abide by the following guidelines:

Comments containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed/posted and are subject to removal by the City:

- a. Comments not topically related to the particular site or blog article being commented upon;

- b. Personal attacks of any kind;
- c. Profane language or vulgar content;
- d. Prejudicial remarks or a comment that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
- e. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- f. Solicitations of commerce; promoting any goods/services or links to other sites;
- g. Advocating, conducting, supporting or encouraging illegal activity of any kind;
- h. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
- i. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party or infringe on copyrights or trademarks;
- j. Supports particular services, products or political organizations/ideas;
- k. Promotes events or activities that are not sponsored by the City;
- l. Contains personal information such as address, birth date, medical information or social security number;
- m. Contains political endorsements of any particular candidate for office, electioneering, or a particular stance on specific legislation;
- n. Contains any items violating the Maryland Public Information Act.

Repeated violations of posting inappropriate comments, as defined above, will subject the author to removal from the City's Social networking site.

There is no right of privacy on the City's Facebook page. All content is considered a public record, and will be retained as required by law.

This is a moderated online discussion group and not a public forum. If you would like to comment on City policies, programs, projects, etc., please visit the City website and select the appropriate contact forum. Attending public hearings or meetings is also suggested.

The comments expressed on social networking sites do not reflect the opinions and position of the City of Hagerstown or its officers and employees. Failure to comply with these Guidelines can result in action by the City to prevent the offender from posting on the Facebook page.