

CITY OF ROLLING HILLS ESTATES

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

I. PURPOSE

This Social Media Policy provides guidelines for the establishment and use by the City of Rolling Hills Estates of social media sites as a means of conveying information to members of the public in recognition of common ways that residents and businesses communicate and may expect to obtain information about the City.

The intended purpose of the City of Rolling Hills Estates' social media sites is to make the public aware about information from the City regarding City's mission, meetings, activities, events, services, and current issues to the residents of Rolling Hills Estates. The policy recognizes the use of the Internet by residents and businesses to communicate and obtain information about the City.

II. DEFINITIONS

"Social media sites" refers to the content created by individuals using accessible, expandable and upgradable publishing technologies through and on the internet. Examples include but are not limited to Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, NextDoor, YouTube, Instagram, Blogs, etc.

"City social media sites" means social media sites that the City establishes and maintains, and over which it has control over all postings, except for advertisements or hyperlinks by the social media site's owners, vendors, or partners. City social media sites are to supplement, and not replace, the City's required notices and standard methods of communication.

"Posts" or "postings" mean information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communication posted on a City social media site.

"City" means the City of Rolling Hills Estates.

"City Manager" means the City Manager of the City or the Manager's designees.

"Comment" or "Comments" mean and include any information, articles, words, pictures, videos or any other form of communicative content posted on a City social media site.

III. GENERAL POLICY

- A. All official City presences on social media sites or services are considered as an extension of the City's information network. The City's official website at www.RollingHillsEstatesCA.gov (or any domain owned by the City) serves as the primary form of communication.

- B. The establishment of the social media sites is subject to approval by the City Manager through the policy decision of City Council.
 - 1. The social media network accounts will be created using an official City email account and should bear the name and official logo of the City.
 - 2. All City social media sites will utilize authorized City contact information for account set-up, monitoring, and access.
 - 3. Use of personal email accounts or phone numbers by a City employee is not allowed for the purpose of setting-up, monitoring, or accessing city social media site.
- C. Social media sites will link back to the official City website for forms, documents, online services, and other information necessary when possible.
- D. Content posted on social media sites are subject to oversight by the City Manager and his/her designees(s).
 - 1. Employees representing the City government via social media outlets must conduct themselves appropriately and professionally at all times.
- E. All City social media sites are to adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies, including but not limited to California Public Records Act, the Ralph M. Brown Act.
 - 1. This includes adherence to established laws and policies regarding records retention, conflicts of interest and copyright.
 - 2. Any content maintained on a City social media site that is related to City business, including a list of subscribers and posted communication may be considered a public record and subject to public disclosure. Content related to City business should be in an accessible format so it can be produced in response to a request.
- F. Members of the City Council, and any Commission or Committee may “like,” “share,” or “retweet” any published postings to promote City news and/or events; but, must not respond or use the site or any form of electronic communication to respond to or engage in serial meetings, or discuss, deliberate, or express opinions on any issue within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body.
- G. City social media sites should comply with usage rules and regulations required by the site provider, including privacy policies.
- H. The City’s social media policy should be accessible to all users either made available on social media site or the City’s website.

- I. City employees and designees representing the City on social media sites will conduct themselves as professional representatives of the City in accordance with all City policies at all times.
- J. City social media sites may contain content, including but not limited to, advertisements or hyperlinks over which the City has no control. The City does not endorse any hyperlink or advertisement placed on the City social media sites by the social media site's owners, vendors or partners.
- K. The City reserves the right to change, modify, or amend all or part of this policy at any time.
- L. The City reserves the right to terminate any City social media site without notice.

IV. CONTENT STANDARD AND GUIDELINES

- A. The content of City social media sites should only pertain to City-sponsored or City-endorsed programs, services, and events. Content includes, but is not limited to, information, photographs, videos, and hyperlinks.
- B. Social Media staff are determined by the City Manager and are given the authority to use social media on behalf of the City and given responsibility to ensure appropriateness of content.
 - 1. Any employee authorized to post items on any of the City's social media sites must review, be familiar with, and comply with the social media site's use policies and terms and conditions.
 - 2. Any employee authorized to post items on any of the City's social media sites will not express his or her own personal views or concerns through such postings. Instead, postings on any of the City's social media sites by an authorized City employee must only reflect the views of the City.
- C. Content posted to the City's social media sites must contain hyperlinks directing users back to the City's official website for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services necessary to conduct business with the City whenever possible.
- D. Postings may be made primarily during normal business hours. After-hours or weekend postings may be made when the news or information is relevant to an event or activity occurring, in the event of a disaster/emergency situation, or with the approval of the City Manager.
- E. Postings must contain information that is freely available to the public and not be confidential as defined by any City policy or state or federal law.
- F. Postings may not contain any employee's personal information, except for the names of employees whose job duties include being available for contact by the public.

- G. Except as expressly provided in this Policy, accessing any social media site must comply with all applicable City policies pertaining to communications and the use of the internet by employees, including email content.

V. COMMENT GUIDELINES

- A. The City reserves the right to implement or remove any functionality of its social media sites, when deemed appropriate by the City Manager. This includes, but is not limited to, information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communication that is posted on a City social media site.
- B. As a public entity the City must abide by certain standards to serve all its constituents in a civil and unbiased manner.
- C. When available, the City utilizes social media site automatic content filtering features to ensure content is using appropriate, non-offensive language to keep with the intent of a “family friendly” forum. All City social media content is subject to monitoring. Comments containing any of the following inappropriate forms of content will not be permitted on any of the City’s social media sites and are subject to removal and/or restriction by the City Manager:
 - 1. Comments not related to the original topic, including random or unintelligible comments; profane, obscene, violent, or pornographic content and/or language;
 - 2. Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on any legally protected category to include race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, physical or mental disability, medical condition, sexual orientation, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, genetic characteristics or information, military and veteran’s status, or any other category protected by federal or state law, including association with individuals with these protected characteristics or perception that an individual has one or more of these protected characteristics;
 - 3. Defamatory or personal attacks;
 - 4. Threats to any person or organization;
 - 5. Comments in support of, or in opposition to, any political campaigns or ballot measures;
 - 6. Solicitation of commerce, including but not limited to advertising of any business or product for sale;
 - 7. Conduct in violation of any federal, state or local law;
 - 8. Encouragement of illegal activity;
 - 9. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or

10. Content that violates a legal ownership interest, such as a copyright, of any party;
 11. Harassment or content which constitutes and/or facilitates stalking;
 12. Content which violates the right to privacy;
 13. Encouragement of violence; and
 14. Comments which may reasonably interfere with, inhibit, or compromise law enforcement investigations, police tactics, police responses to incidents and/or the safety of police staff and officers.
- D. A comment posted by a member of the public on any City 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, nor do such comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the City.
- E. The City reserves the right to deny access to City social media sites for any individual, who violates the City's Social Media Policy, at any time and without prior notice.
- F. Comments posted to this page will be monitored and inappropriate content as defined above will be removed as soon as possible and without prior notice. Please note, comments posted to this page are monitored and our Facebook setting will automatically hide a comment if profanity is used within the post.
- G. Members of the public are encouraged to contact the City directly by phone or via e-mail with questions or concerns related to City business, as City employees are requested to refrain from engaging in regularly responses on City social media sites as a representative of the City. If a City employee responds to a comment, in his/her capacity as a City employee, the employee's name and title should be made available, and the employee will not share personal information about himself or herself, or other City employees.
- H. By posting or commenting on the City's social media platforms, users agree to the City's terms of use. Social media users participate by his/her own choice, taking personal responsibility for his/her comments, username and any information provided.