

City of Rancho Cordova Social Media Policy

1. Purpose

This Social Media Policy establishes guidelines for the implementation and use of social media sites by the City of Rancho Cordova and its citizens. The purpose of City social media sites is to disseminate information about City programs, services, activities and current issues to members of the public. Please be aware that if you are a City of Rancho Cordova representative engaging with the public over social media, or if you are a citizen engaging with City of Rancho Cordova over social media, you are agreeing to the following:

2. Definitions

- a. "Social media sites" refers to content created by individuals on the internet and mobile-based tools. Examples include Facebook, Twitter, blogs, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, Photobucket, and websites. This definition is intended to cover all social media sites and therefore is not an exclusive list.
- b. "City social media site(s)" refers to social media sites which the City of Rancho Cordova establishes and maintains, and over which it has control over all postings, except for advertisements or hyperlinks by the social media site's owners, hosts, vendors or partners.
- c. "Posts" or "posting(s)" refer to information, articles, pictures, writings, videos or any other form of communication posted on a social media site.

3. Branding of City Social Media Sites

Social media pages developed by the City will be branded by the City's Communications & Public Affairs Department as "official", must bear the name and official logo of the City, must bear the statement "This is an official City of Rancho Cordova page", and must include a link to the City of Rancho Cordova Social Media Policy.

4. City Procedures

- a. The City's Communications & Public Affairs Department will maintain a list of City social media sites that are approved for use by City departments and employees.
- b. The City's Communications & Public Affairs Department will maintain a list of City social media sites, including login and password information.

- c. City employees will inform the City's Communications & Public Affairs Department of any ideas for new social media sites or administrative changes to existing sites.
- d. The City must be able to immediately edit or remove content from City social media sites.
- e. During emergencies, all social media content and postings must be coordinated with the City's Communications & Public Affairs Department as part of emergency support functions. Depending on the incident, publishers or employees designated to post on the City social media sites may be directed to point to specific City social media sites that will serve as the main source(s) of information. The City's Communications & Public Affairs Department reserves the right to publish content directly to any official City social media site during an emergency.

5. City General Use Policy

- a. City social media sites are for official purposes only.
- b. The City's Communications & Public Affairs Department or designee will be responsible for the content and upkeep (including maintenance and monitoring) of the City social media sites.
- c. The City's website - www.cityoffranchocordova.org - will remain the City's primary and predominant means of internet communication.
- d. City social media sites shall supplement, and not replace, the City's required notices and standard methods of communication.
- e. City social media sites will link to the City's official website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business with the City.
- f. The City may periodically run a sweepstakes or contest through its social media channels. Rules will be posted on the City's website at <http://www.cityoffranchocordova.org/departments/communications-and-public-affairs> during such occurrences.
- g. The establishment of City social media sites is subject to approval by the City's Communications & Public Affairs Director.
- h. City social media sites shall clearly state that such sites are maintained by the City and that the sites comply with the City's Social Media Policy. The sites will contain a link to the City's Social Media Policy.
- i. The City's Communications & Public Affairs Department shall monitor content on City social media sites to ensure adherence to both the City's Social Media Policy and the interest and goals of the City.
- j. City social media sites will comply with usage rules and regulations required by the site provider, including privacy policies.
- k. City social media sites will adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and practices.
- l. The City reserves the right to terminate any City social media site at any time without notice.
- m. City social media sites will utilize authorized contact information for account set-up, monitoring and access.
- n. 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 City social media sites by the site's owners, vendors or partners.

- o. The City reserves the right to change, modify, or amend all or part of this policy at any time. All revisions to this policy must be reviewed and approved in writing by the City's Communications & Public Affairs Department and City Attorney's Office.
- p. City social media sites will be managed in a manner consistent with the Brown Act. A majority of members of the City Council, City commissions, or City committees shall not respond to, "like," share, re-Tweet, make posts, exchange messages, or otherwise participate in any published postings, or use the sites to engage in serial meetings by having a majority of the council engage in a discussion, deliberation, or decision regarding any matter within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body. For example, three or more Council members may not engage in a discussion related to a City matter on social media.
- q. Users acknowledge that all posts to City social media sites are in the public domain and therefore are in no way confidential.

6. Employee Conduct for City Social Media Sites

- a. The content of City social media sites will only pertain to City-sponsored or City-endorsed programs, services, events, media coverage, etc. Content includes, but is not limited to, information, photographs, videos and hyperlinks.
- b. Employee postings of a personal nature are not allowed.
- c. Content posted to the City social media sites should highlight the City of Rancho Cordova, which may include its citizens, businesses, community enhancement projects, media coverage, etc.
- d. Content should include text, as well as visual illustration such as a graphic, photo, and/or video, and may also include a hyperlink directing users back to the City's official website or a partner's website for in-depth information, etc.
- e. The City's Communications & Public Affairs Department or designee is responsible for responding to posts on the City social media sites except if the Citizen Conduct is broken (see Section 6).
- f. All employees authorized to post items on any of the City social media sites will review, be familiar with, and comply with this policy and the social media site's use policies and terms of conditions.
- g. Employees representing the City social media sites will conduct themselves at all times as a professional representative of the City and in accordance with City policies.
- h. Employees authorized to post items on any of the City social media sites will not express his or her own personal views or concerns through such postings. Postings on City social media sites will only reflect the views of the City.
- i. 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.
- j. Postings may not contain any personal information, except for the names of employees whose job duties include being available for contact by the public.
- k. An opinion expressed on City social media sites is posted for discussion only and is not a substitute for a formal statement in a public hearing process.

- l. The City's Communications & Public Affairs Department or designee will post to and monitor discourse on its social media sites during normal business hours, Monday through Friday. After-hours or weekend postings will only be made with approval of the City's Communications & Public Affairs Department.
- m. Employees shall also follow the requirements listed under Section 7 below related to Citizen Conduct.
- n. Employees participating on City social media sites as an individual out of personal interest on matters of a public concern that are unrelated to their official City duties, and not in their role as a City employee, shall state in such posts that their views do not represent the City and that they are speaking in their individual capacity.

7. Citizen Conduct for Agency Social Media Sites

Articles, posts and comments containing any of the following forms of content will not be allowed and will be removed as soon as possible and/or the account blocked from further interaction at the City's Communications & Public Affairs Department's sole discretion:

- a. Content that contains potentially libelous, malicious, offensive, threatening, defamatory, harassing, profane or obscene images or language, including but not limited to those indecent words that were the subject of *F.C.C. v. Pacifica Foundation* 438 U.S. 726 (1978).
- b. Content that includes attacks of a personal nature on an elected official, staff member or anyone featured in a post.
- c. Pursuant to prohibitions on using public resources for campaign purposes, content in support of, or opposition to, political campaigns, candidates or ballot measures.
- d. Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, physical or mental disabilities or status with regard to public assistance. Content of an obscene, sexual, or pornographic nature or include links thereto (including images that contain nudity or are of a sexual nature).
- e. Advertising, promotional announcements, solicitations of commerce, or spam.
- f. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity.
- g. Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems, including City infrastructure.
- h. Personally identifiable information, such as an address, phone number, social security number or other sensitive information.
- i. Content that represents a person other than the one posting the comment.
- j. Content containing links to other web sites or pages that are not relevant to the topic.
- k. Content that breaches any law, confidentiality, or violates a legal ownership interest of another party.
- l. The City disclaims responsibility and liability for inappropriate material posted by visitors.
- m. The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law.

- n. Comments by external parties on City social media pages are not official public testimony concerning any project, application, or program.
- o. Comments should be related to the posted topic for the City social media sites.
- p. City social media sites are not meant for comments that do not directly relate to the purpose or topic of the social media site, or for service requests and other press inquiries. Questions or concerns regarding the use and operation of the City’s social media sites, and press inquiries, should be directed to the City’s Communications Team:
 - Assistant Communications Specialist Russell Hartley at rhartley@cityoffranchocordova.org or (916) 851-8792
 - Communications Officer Ashley Downton at adownton@cityoffranchocordova.org or (916) 851-8723
 - Communications & Public Affairs Director Maria Kniestedt at mkniestedt@cityoffranchocordova.org or (916) 851-8791To submit a service request, please visit [Fresh Connect](#).

Questions or concerns? Contact Russell Hartley, Assistant Communications Specialist, at rhartley@cityoffranchocordova.org or (916) 851-8792.

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