



City of Brentwood Social Media Policy

PURPOSE: The City of Brentwood's use of social media platforms is intended to expand and enhance communication to a growing number of citizens who rely on social media for news and updates about Brentwood. The goal of our use of social networking is to communicate and promote information about the business of the City and how we serve our citizens. The City must ensure that use of social networking maintains our identity, integrity and reputation while minimizing actual or potential risks. The main goals of our social media communications are:

- To provide communications in a timely manner about City news, emergencies, road closures and construction, parks and recreational programs, job opportunities, government services, holiday closings, weather alerts, educational information, and other matters of interest to social media users
- To engage residents and businesses in Brentwood in dialogue about the City

PLATFORMS: This policy applies to all social media outlets used by the City of Brentwood, which at the time of adoption of this policy included Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Vimeo, Instagram, Nextdoor and Nixle. More outlets may be added as social media opportunities continue to expand.

POLICY COMPONENTS: This policy is divided into two components:

- An external policy establishing standards for use of the City's social media outlets by the public.
- An internal policy establishing standards for City employees who are authorized to post and manage content on official City of Brentwood social media pages.



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External: Public Use of Social Media

APPLICABILITY: This policy establishes standards for use of the City's social media outlets by the public.

CONTENT STANDARDS: The City of Brentwood invites and encourages people to discuss issues affecting the City on its social media sites, which serve as limited public forums. However, the City of Brentwood will not allow posts to remain that include:

- Nudity/pornography or messages/depictions with sexual, obscene or indecent content
- Language or information that is foul, vulgar, scurrilous or scatological
- Promotion of the use of alcohol or tobacco
- Threats, attacks, harassment, unlawful discrimination or hate language
- Advocation of illegal or inappropriate use of firearms or drugs, or any illegal activity
- Depictions or promotions of animal cruelty
- Promotion or endorsement of a political campaign or candidate
- Programs and events not officially sponsored by the City of Brentwood or a City board.
- Solicitations for donations, except for official City-sponsored activities.

The City of Brentwood reserves the right to close a conversation if comments stray from the context of the original post.

Personal Information

The confidentiality and privacy of individuals should be considered high priority. Social media users should not include individual addresses, phone or email information in social media postings without permission.

City's Rights to Posted Information

All messages, images and information posted on the City's social media or sent to the City by electronic means will be considered public information. The City may repost or disseminate such messages, images and information as it deems appropriate.

Privacy Policy

Use of the City of Brentwood's social media is subject to the privacy policy and disclaimers found on the City's website www.brentwoodtn.gov



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Public Records Law

The City of Brentwood's official social media sites are subject to applicable public records laws. Any content maintained in a social media format related to City business, including communication posted by the City and communication received from citizens, is a public record. The City is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any public records request for social media content.

If you have any questions concerning the City of Brentwood's Social Media Policy, please contact the City of Brentwood Community Relations Director, Deanna Lambert at (615) 371-2259 or Deanna.Lambert@brentwoodtn.gov



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Internal: Administration of City Social Media

APPLICABILITY: This policy establishes standards to ensure timely, accurate and appropriate use of social media outlets by City employees who are authorized to post and manage content on official City of Brentwood social media pages.

MANAGING CONTENT

- The City of Brentwood will use a distributed control model for managing social media content. This means that control is distributed to several groups within one government, but with one gatekeeper per site. The Community Relations Director will serve as the one gatekeeper for all official City of Brentwood social media sites.
- The Community Relations Department is responsible for the development of the City of Brentwood social media strategy and oversight of the policies and procedures pertaining to the social media outlets used by the City. The Community Relations Department will establish social media sites when needed and distribute access to user names, passwords and instructions on how to access the different social media sites. Any department wishing to create a new social media outlet must first consult with the Community Relations Director. The Community Relations Director will approve all social media sites used by the City and serve as an administrator on each authorized City social media page.
- Each department will designate authorized individuals to serve as Page Administrators, who will be responsible for posting, monitoring, and/or updating social media information. A list of Page Administrators will be maintained by the Community Relations Department.
- Department directors and each department's Page Administrator(s) are responsible for the content of their department's social media information and are authorized to post information on official City of Brentwood social media outlets. No other departmental employees are to post information on behalf of the City without prior authorization. To ensure that messages adhere to the City's social media policy and strategy, all departmental information to be provided to the public shall be reviewed and authorized by the department director and the Community Relations Director.



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- Posts by the public on the City's social media pages are to be monitored by Page Administrators, and any posts that violate the content standards established in the City's External Policy for Public Use of Social Media are to be deleted. However, Page Administrators must consult with the department director and the Community Relations Director before deleting a comment. Criticism and irritating comments are not acceptable reasons for deleting comments. Whenever any content is determined to meet criteria for deletion from a page, the content shall be retained, and a record shall be kept of the reason for the deletion. Unless the speech clearly falls into an unprotected category, First Amendment challenges can be anticipated. The following measures are to be observed for all deleted content:
 - a. Take a screen shot of the deleted message.
 - b. Document why the message was removed and the policy the message violated.
 - c. Save a copy of this documentation for your files and send this information in an email to your department director and the Community Relations Director.
 - d. To facilitate fulfillment of future public records requests, please use the following protocol for the subject line of said email: Comment Deletion – [social media platform name] – [date]. For example: Comment Deletion – Facebook – 11-1-2016.
- Page Administrators should avoid engaging in online debates with commenters but should instead react positively and provide factual information, if appropriate. Please consult with the Community Relations Director for assistance if needed.
- Page Administrators for the Police and Fire Departments, working in conjunction with the Chiefs of their Departments, are responsible for the content and usage of Nixle, a social media application specific to public safety operations. To ensure that Nixle is used appropriately, the Police and Fire Departments will develop and follow guidelines that define the circumstances under which Nixle should be used and when other social media outlets should be used.
- The Information Technology and Community Relations Departments will explore the best practices for providing an archive of social media information which is to be kept in accordance with the City's Records Retention Schedule and applicable law.



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POLICY UPDATES

The Community Relations and Legal Departments will routinely review and propose updates to the social media policy to comply with applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

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