

City of Niceville Social Media Policy

This Social Media Policy is to be read and applied in conjunction with the City of Niceville's Social Media Strategy and Guidelines.

I. Purpose

The City of Niceville (the City) will use social media tools and other emerging media platforms to reach a broader audience, enhance transparency, and increase citizen engagement. The City encourages the use of diverse communication platforms to further the goals of the City and its departments, where appropriate, through dissemination of information about the City's mission, meetings, activities and current issues to members of the public. The City has an overriding interest in deciding what is stated or set forth on behalf of the City on social media sites. The purpose of this policy is to set forth the City's policies and procedures regulating the City's presence on social media websites and guiding the activities of employees who are responsible for maintaining the City's presence on social media websites. This policy does not govern or regulate the use of personal social media sites by City employees or the privacy rights associated therewith. The goals of City of Niceville's social media sites are to increase the public's knowledge, trust, and use of City services; promote the value and importance of City services among and between governing officials, civic leaders, and the general public; and maintain open, professional and responsive communication with members of the public and the news media.

II. Ownership

All social media communications composed, sent, or received on City equipment are the property of the City. While the social media sites are administered by the City, the content on the sites is not entirely controlled by the City. The City will do its best to prevent usage of its social media sites by commercial interests. The City does not endorse any links or advertisements on its social media sites placed by the site owners or their vendors or partners

III. General Policy

A. The City Manager and Public Information Officer shall develop and implement Social Media Strategies and Guidelines for the administration and use of the City's social media platforms and other communication outreach methods in conjunction with this Policy.

B. The City will maintain Citywide accounts on various platforms that will be used to disseminate City news. The social media platforms used must be approved by the City Manager and Public Information Officer.

C. The Public Information Officer will have sole access and responsibility for all updating, managing, monitoring, and creating of all social media postings on the City's approved social media platforms. The Department Director's will designate an employee who shall be responsible for creating, and sending information or messages to the Public Information Managers office for posting on the different media platforms.

D. The City Manager may at any time, authorize additional users to have access to post on City Social Media accounts.

E. All media posted to social media platforms will be approved by the Public Information Officer to ensure branding consistency. This includes graphics, flyers, articles, and pictures.

F. The City's social media sites are subject to Florida's Sunshine Public Records Laws. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to City business, including a list of subscribers and posted communication (with certain exceptions), is a public record. The City Clerk is responsible for responding to any public records requests for public records on social media. All social media content and comments are archived for this purpose. Content related to City business must be maintained in an accessible format and so that it can be produced in response to a request.

G. Any City employee who violates this Policy shall be denied access to all agency social media sites, and may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

H. The City reserves the right to terminate City social media sites at any time without notice. The City Manager may direct the deletion of a social media account that is not being utilized correctly, or is underutilized.

I. The City Manager may change, modify, or otherwise amend all or part of this Policy at any time.

IV. Comment Policy

A. Users and visitors to the City's social media sites must be notified that the intended purpose of the site is to serve as a means of communication between the City and the community at large. All comments posted to the City's social media sites will be monitored. The City's social media site articles, posts and comments containing any of the following forms of content will not be allowed and shall be immediately removed by the Public Information Officer.

1. Profane, obscene, violent, or pornographic language and/or content;

2. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, sex, gender identity or expression, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, pregnancy,

covered medical condition, sexual orientation, military or veteran's status, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law;

3. Sexual content or links to sexual content;

4. Solicitations of commerce not related to City business, including but not limited to, advertising of a business or product for sale and other pure commercial speech;

5. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;

6. Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems or employees;

7. Content that does not pertain to City business;

8. Defamatory or personal attacks;

9. Threats or encouragement of violence or any other harmful act directed to any person, or persons, group, or organization;

10. Content that violates a legal ownership interest, such as copyright or trademark, of any other party.

11. Conduct in violation of any federal, state, or local law.

12. Content which violates the right to privacy.

13. 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.

14. Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures.

B. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained, including the time, date, and identity of the poster (when available) in accordance with the Florida Sunshine Public Records Laws.

C. The City reserves the right to deny access to City social media sites for any individual who violates this Policy, at any time and without prior notice.

D. Users and visitors to the City's social media sites must also be notified of the City's "Terms of Use":

1. A comment posted by a member of the public on any City of Niceville social media site is the opinion of the commentator or poster only, and the publication of a comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by, the City of Niceville, nor do such comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the City of Niceville.

2. The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the City of Niceville is not obligated to take such actions, and the City disclaims any and all responsibility and liability for any materials that the City deems inappropriate for posting, which cannot be removed in an expeditious and otherwise timely manner.

3. By posting a comment, users agree to indemnify the City of Niceville, its officers and employees from and against all liabilities, judgments, damages, and costs (including attorney's fees) incurred by any of them which arise out of or are related to content posted by users. If a user does not agree to these terms, the individual should not use the City of Niceville's social media sites as a violation of these terms may lead to legal liability.

4. The City does not guarantee the authenticity, accuracy, appropriateness nor security of external links, websites or content linked thereto. Additionally, the City is not responsible for the content, quality, or completeness of any offsite materials referenced by or linked through the City's social media accounts. By using the City's social networking sites, the user acknowledges and accepts the risk of injury or damage from viewing, hearing, downloading or storing such materials rests entirely with the user and that the City is not responsible for any materials stored on other social networking sites or websites, nor is it liable for any inaccurate, defamatory, offensive or illegal materials found on other social networking sites or websites.

5. Any provision of direct links should not be construed as an endorsement or sponsorship of these external sites, their content, or their hosts. The City specifically disavows legal responsibility for what a user may find on another site, whether or not operated by the City. The views and opinions of the authors of documents published on or linked to the City's social media accounts do not necessarily state or reflect the opinion, policy or position of the City.

6. The City does not endorse any content, viewpoint, products or services linked from its social networking sites and shall not be held liable for any losses caused by reliance on the accuracy, reliability or timeliness of such information. The City does not warrant the accuracy or reliability of or endorse any products or service providers listed or linked to its site

E. The above comment guidelines and disclaimers (Terms of Use) must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained, including the time, date and identity of the poster when available, in accordance with the Florida Sunshine Public Record Laws.

V. Community Standards

A. Facebook's Community of Standards - All comments posted to any City of Niceville Facebook site are bound by Facebook's Community Standards, located at <http://www.facebook.com/communitystandards>, and the City of Niceville reserves the right to report any violation of Facebook's Community Standards to Facebook with the intent of Facebook taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action.

B. The Twitter Rules - When applicable, the City of Niceville reserves the right to report any violation of the Twitter Rules, located at <https://support.twitter.com/articles/18311> with the intent of Twitter taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action.

C. YouTube Community Guidelines - When applicable, the City of Niceville reserves the right to report any violation of the YouTube Community Guidelines, located at <http://www.youtube.com/yt/policyandsafety/communityguidelines.html> with the intent of YouTube taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action.

D. Instagram Community Guidelines - When applicable, the City of Niceville reserves the right to report any violation of the Instagram Community Guidelines, located at <https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119/> with the intent of Instagram taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action.

E. LinkedIn User Agreement - When applicable, the City of Niceville reserves the right to report any violation of the LinkedIn User Agreement, located at <https://www.linkedin.com/legal/user-agreement> with the intent of LinkedIn taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action.

F. Nextdoor Community Guidelines - When applicable, the City of Niceville reserves the right to report any violation of the Nextdoor Community Guidelines, located at https://help.nextdoor.com/s/article/community-guidelines?language=en_US.

City of Niceville

Social Media Strategy and Guidelines

Introduction

Social media can be an excellent way for government agencies to engage the public and spread the word about their community-enriching programs and services. Local, state, and federal governments that effectively manage social media have the potential to strengthen community relationships, increase engagement, and restore public trust. Community engagement via social media platforms can be critical in public satisfaction, awareness, and safety.

Our Strategy

Generational Marketing – creating a targeted media approach that caters to all generational audiences through the utilization of multiple channels including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Nextdoor, etc.

Accessibility- Publishing content that can be viewed by all. Our media channels should be accessible to all users, including people living with visual and hearing disabilities. An understanding of digital accessibility is vital in ensuring all demographics can receive our information and media. Content should also be disability-inclusive in terms of language, message, and media.

Build Recognition- Putting a face to the municipality through social media channels can increase trust and foster recognition in what are usually faceless press and media releases. Whenever appropriate, this relationship building approach will be implemented.

Become a Trusted Source: Our followers should be able to rely on us as the primary and first point of information for all municipality related functions, and as a resource for other information concerning the city.

Social Media Guidelines

Post Regularly: consistent dissemination of information will foster engagement and provide our followers with a sense of reliability and trust.

Respond to comments: engaging and responding to comments lets our followers know that we are reachable and provides a channel for real time communication.

Live stream events: when possible, live stream! This increases accessibility by allowing those who are not able to attend events physically, enjoy them via media.

Link off to important URLs: Linking resources, websites, and other social media platforms makes post interactive and is also a great way to provide a primary source of information.

Ensure Brand Consistency: Outside of holidays and special events, most posts and graphics should align with our branding. Whenever possible, incorporate the city colors and seal. Reoccurring post should always be branded.

Publish to multiple channels: Reposting important events and information on multiple channels ensures a timely spread of information and is more likely to reach multiple demographics of the community.

Keep followers informed: Information should be dispersed timely. Alerts, events, and notices should always be given before occurrence, outside the case of an unforeseen emergency.

Repost from official sources: It's best not to share or repost information that cannot be verified. Only repost from official accounts.