

BOLDY LEADING

Breckenridge



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The City of Breckenridge seeks to provide municipal services to support the highest quality of life for its residents. Social media platforms will be used by City staff members to:

- A. Provide information to residents
- B. Communicate with residents during emergency situations
- C. Acquire feedback from residents
- D. Publicize new services and events to residents
- E. Direct residents to the City's official website

Since social media networking is a major informational platform, it is necessary to provide guidelines that will help the City effectively manage its risks in a social media environment as well as maintain an effective online communication presence. The policies below pertain to City of Breckenridge social media content. The City reserves the right to change, modify, or amend all or part of this policy at any time. This Social Media Policy applies to all City of Breckenridge employees. Any violation of the policy is subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the City's Employee Policy Manual.

EMPLOYEE USE & CONDUCT

This social media policy applies to any City employee who participates in social media whether on behalf of the City of Breckenridge or for personal use. Anyone who creates or contributes to blogs, social media accounts, websites, or any other kind of social media inside or outside the City's domain is expected to understand and follow these policies. These guidelines are subject to change as new social networking sites emerge.

EMPLOYEE USE AND CONDUCT-ON BEHALF OF THE CITY

- A. Subject to approval by City Manager, Department Heads have the option of allowing, or disallowing, employees to participate in existing social media accounts as part of their job duties.
- B. All City of Breckenridge information considered non-public in nature must be protected. Do not divulge or discuss proprietary information, personal details about other people, or other confidential material.
- C. Do not cite vendors, suppliers, clients, citizens, co-workers or other stakeholders without their approval.
- D. Do not use ethnic slurs, profanity, personal insults, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the City's workplace.
- E. Use of your City e-mail address and communication in your official capacity constitutes representing the City. Employees representing the City on City social media accounts shall conduct themselves as a professional representative of the City and act in accordance with all City policies.
- F. Follow all copyright laws, open records laws, retention laws, fair use and financial disclosure laws and any other laws that might apply.

- G. If a crime, injury, or other mishap takes place at a City facility or on City property, employees should not comment or post pictures regarding the alleged crimes or incidents on social media channels without permission from the City Manager and Breckenridge Police Chief.
- H. All City of Breckenridge social networking activities are subject to State of Texas open records laws.

EMPLOYEE USE & CONDUCT-PERSONAL USE

While the City encourages its employees to enjoy and make good use of their off-duty time, certain activities on the part of employees may become a problem if they have the effect of impairing the work of any employee; harassing, demeaning, or creating a hostile work environment for any employee; disrupting the smooth and orderly flow of work within the City; or harming the goodwill and reputation of the City in the community at large. In the area of social media (print, broadcast, digital, and online), employees may use such media in any way they choose during non-working hours as long as such use does not produce the adverse consequences noted above. For this reason, the City reminds its employees that the following guidelines apply in their off-duty use of social media:

- A. Employees are strictly prohibited from publishing any personal information about themselves, another employe of the city, or a customer in any public medium (print, broadcast, digital, or online) that:
 - a. Has the potential or effect of involving the employee, his/her co-worker, or the City in any kind of dispute or conflict with other employees or third parties.
 - b. Interferes with the work of the employee.
 - c. Creates a harassing, demeaning or hostile working environment for any employees.
 - d. Disrupts the smooth and orderly flow of work within the office, or the delivery of services to the city's customers.
 - e. Harms the goodwill and reputation of the City among its customers or the community at large.
 - f. Tends to place in doubt the reliability, trustworthiness, or sound judgement of the person who is the subject of the information.
 - g. Reveals proprietary or confidential Information.
- B. If you publish content to any website outside of the City of Breckenridge's official online presence, and it has something to do with subjects associated with the City, provide a disclaimer such as: "The postings are my own and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the City of Breckenridge."
- C. Never use or reference your formal position when writing in a non-official capacity. Do not use your City email to establish a private social media presence.

- D. City employees, especially those in leadership positions, must consider whether the personal thoughts they publish, even in clearly personal venues, may be misunderstood as expressing the position of the City of Breckenridge. This includes social and political stances. The City, and its ambassadors, must exhibit a sense of neutrality.
- E. Be aware of your City of Breckenridge association in online social networks. If you identify yourself as a City employee or have a prominent position in which the public knows your association with the City, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself as a professional.
- F. When writing in your official capacity, do not write anything that could appear to be legal advice. Legal issues should be handled through the City's regular procedures to avoid conflicts and uphold ethics.
- G. Do not discuss the City's customers, or finances without the City's express written consent to do so.
- H. Do not use any City Logos or trademarks without prior written consent of the City.
- I. Do not make any unauthorized references to any kind of former employees of the City on social media sites.

Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. The absence of explicit reference to a particular site does not limit the extent of the application of this policy. If no policy or guideline exists, the City's employees should use their professional judgment and follow the most prudent course of action. If an employee is uncertain, consult with their supervisor or the City Manager before proceeding.

OFFICIAL ACCOUNT SET-UP & SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

OVERSIGHT

The City Manager and/or designee(s) shall have administrator privileges for every city social media site and will be responsible for oversight of the City of Breckenridge's social media accounts to include:

- A. Authorizing new social media accounts created to promote official business.
- B. Monitoring accounts officially representing the city and ensuring content is in line with City goals and objectives.
- C. Providing social media and marketing guidance to ensure consistent and accurate messaging and branding.
- D. Coordinating training for City employees upon request, including department directors, management staff and departmental liaisons.
- E. Maintaining a list of social media domains, account logins and passwords, and ensuring account managers regularly change passwords for security reasons.

ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

Departments establishing a social media account need to designate an account manager who is responsible for operating and maintaining the account, as well as developing monthly reports on the account's performance if requested. Account managers should be knowledgeable about their departments, the City of Breckenridge in general, and have good communication skills. Account managers must meet the following requirements:

- A. Be able to post important information (which is applicable to the public), monitor account postings, and enforce the provisions of this policy regarding appropriate content and, when necessary, respond to inquiries.
- B. Account managers shall ensure that the established social networking account clearly indicates that any articles and content, posted or submitted for posting, are subject to public disclosure.
- C. It is prohibited for account managers to use a City of Breckenridge related social media account for self-promotion and/or personal advertising.
- D. Account managers shall report to a supervisor, City Manager, or designee when an issue about a citizen's comment or question is outside the account manager's realm of knowledge. When appropriate, the account manager shall communicate with the City Manager or designee about responses for possible City Manager and/or City Commission notification.
- E. If an employee responsible for maintaining content of a social media account leaves the City of Breckenridge, his/her access to the account will be revoked and passwords for the account changed immediately.

All content, including external hyperlinks, is subject to review, editing, and/or removal by the City of Breckenridge to ensure consistency with City policies and procedures, correct style and grammar, and accuracy. The account manager is primarily responsible for performing the review and editing described herein, but any employee who observes content that is inconsistent with City policies and procedures, or that is erroneous, inaccurate, offensive or otherwise objectionable shall immediately notify the account manager, City Manager or designee.

ACCOUNT IMPLEMENTATION

- A. City social media accounts shall utilize authorized City department contact information, including phone numbers and employee email addresses, for account set-up, monitoring and access. Using personal email accounts or phone numbers to set up or post to City social media sites is not allowed.
- B. For Facebook: Establish a page for the department not a "Friend" or "Group Page". This will allow the moderator to better control the message in an area designated specifically for organizations.

- C. Upon approval, City social media accounts shall bear the name and/or official logo of the City or department. The City Admin staff (City Manager, City Secretary, Assistant to the City Manager) can assist in creating a graphic that will fulfill this requirement.
- D. In the “About Us” or other appropriate section, include the words “Official City of Breckenridge [Department Name] Facebook, X, Instagram, Nextdoor, LinkedIn, or etc. Page.”
- E. City social media accounts shall include the disclaimer provided in the “Security and Legal issues” section of this policy, clearly stating that such accounts are maintained by the City and that the accounts comply with the City’s Social Media Policy.
- F. The City’s Social Media Policy shall be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink.
- G. A link to www.breckenridgetx.gov shall be easily accessible on the department’s social media account(s).
- H. For each social media account the department creates, password information shall be submitted to the City Manager and/or designee and stored in a safe place only accessible by those designated.
- I. City social media accounts shall adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies

Texas State Law and relevant City records retention schedules apply to social media formats and social media content.

USE OF CERTAIN SOCIAL MEDIA APPLICATIONS AND SERVICES ON CITY DEVICES PROHIBITED.

Pursuant to Senate Bill 1893, The City of Breckenridge prohibits the installation or use of a covered application on any device owned or leased by the City and requires the removal of such application from those devices.

“Covered application” means:

- A. The social media service TikTok or any successor application or service developed or provided by ByteDance Limited, or any entity owned by ByteDance Limited.
- B. A social medial media application or service specified by proclamation of the governor under Section 620.005 Texas Government Code.

The City of Breckenridge will identify, track, and manage all City owned or leased devices including mobile phones, tablets, laptops, desktop computers, or any other internet-capable devices to:

- A. Prohibit the installation of a covered application.
- B. Prohibit the use of a covered application.

- C. Remove a covered application from a city-owned or leased device that was on the device prior to the passage of S.B. 1893 (88th Leg, R.S.)
- D. Remove an application from a city owned or leased device if the Governor issues a proclamation identifying it as a covered application.

Covered Application Exceptions

The City of Breckenridge may permit exceptions authorizing the installation and use of a covered application on city-owned or leased devices consistent with the authority provided by Government Code Chapter 620.

Government Code Section 620.004 allows The City of Breckenridge to install and use a covered application on an applicable device to the extent necessary for:

- A. Providing Law enforcement
- B. Developing or implementing information security measures

If the City of Breckenridge authorizes an exception allowing for the installation and use of a covered application. The City of Breckenridge must use measures to mitigate the risks posed to the state during the application. The City of Breckenridge must document whichever measures it took to mitigate the risks posed to the state.

GUIDELINES FOR POSTING AND REPLYING TO COMMENTS AS AN ACCOUNT MANAGER

The City Manager and/or Designee reserves the right to delete any comments or posts made to the City of Breckenridge's official social media accounts.

- A. Posting Comments
 - a. Account managers are accountable for the content of their department posts, and will ensure the posted information is accurate.
 - b. To ensure clarity, account managers should reread their posts and comments prior to submitting posts to check for grammar and spelling errors.
 - c. Account managers shall not include information revealing any individual's personal information such as addresses, phone numbers, social security numbers, or other sensitive information within their comments.
 - d. Account managers shall represent themselves as City of Breckenridge employees in all City social media communications.
 - e. The City of Breckenridge shall not utilize social media platforms for postings of outside entities or interests not aligned with the City of Breckenridge's goals and objectives.
 - f. City social media posts shall link back to the City's official website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business with the City.

- g. All comments must be within the scope of the subject matter of the City's post, tweet, etc. New postings shall be relevant, current and appropriate.

B. Responding to Comments

- a. Account managers' responses to comments shall be limited to providing factual information or reciting established official policy. Account managers shall not express opinions, nor argue with commentators or comment relating to City policies and practices.
- b. Responses shall be civil. They shall not contain malicious, offensive, threatening, profane, or insulting language. Above all else, respect others. No references to the race, sex, physical characteristics or personality of other participants or individuals, or attacks on individual character will be permitted.
- c. The account managers and administrators must be committed to listening to our social media audience and to reviewing and responding to social media inquiries, comments and messages in a timely manner, preferably within 24 hours.

CONTENT

Allowed and Suggested Content

Guidelines for information approved to be posted on City of Breckenridge social media accounts are as follows:

- A. The City will post accurate stories about positive, non-political City events for citizens to participate in or attend.
- B. The City has full permission or rights to any content posted by the City, including photographs and videos.
- C. Postings must contain information that is freely available to the public and not be confidential as defined by any City policy, state or federal law.
- D. The content of City social media accounts shall primarily pertain to City-sponsored or City-endorsed programs, services and events. Content includes, but is not limited to, information, photographs, videos, and hyperlinks.

Prohibited and Discouraged Content

Postings to City social media accounts shall NOT contain any of the following:

- A. Postings may NOT contain any personal information, except for the names of employees whose job duties include being available for contact by the public.
- B. Comments not related to the particular posting being commented upon.

- C. Comments in support of, or opposition to, political campaigns, candidates or ballot measures.
- D. Profane language or content.
- E. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation, as well as any other category protected by federal, state or local laws.
- F. Sexual content or links to sexual content.
- G. Solicitations of commerce.
- H. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity.
- I. Information that might compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
- J. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

PUBLIC USE POLICY

The City of Breckenridge social media accounts provide an opportunity for the public to share and discuss information about the City's programs and activities. Posted public comments reflect only the opinions of the authors and not the City of Breckenridge or its employees. Comments are reviewed and screened in accordance with the City's social media policy. Any comments found in non-compliance will be removed.

Content Restriction and removal

The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content, without notice, if found in violation of this procedure or applicable law, including but not limited to the following:

- A. Inappropriate or denigrating language or libelous content. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on 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, or any other legally protected status.
- B. Sexual content or links to sexual content.
- C. Threats of violence.
- D. Solicitation for political, charitable or private business purposes.
- E. Solicitations of commerce.
- F. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity.
- G. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
- H. Content that violates proprietary information of any other party.
- I. Private, privileged or confidential information.

- J. Any other content prejudicial to the good of business.

Best Practices and Records Retention

- A. Comments should be directly related to the posted topic.
- B. Social media accounts established by the City of Breckenridge shall not be used for political, solicitation, self-promotion or personal advertising purposes.
- C. In the case of identical posts, the first submission will be used.
- D. For the protection of privacy, comments that include personal information such as phone numbers, addresses, or other personal identifying information are prohibited.
- E. Due to their often time-sensitive nature, questions from the news media should be directed to the City Manager and/or designee, and not posted on a social media account.
- F. Any content posted to a City social media account will be managed, stored and retrieved to comply with the City of Breckenridge's records retention schedules, and is subject to Freedom of Information Act and e-discovery laws and policies.
- G. Public user comments that are deleted for being in violation of this policy shall be retained by moderators for the required retention period in a format that:
 - a. Preserves the integrity of the original record.
 - b. Is easily accessible using the approved City platforms and tools.
 - c. Provides a description of the reason the specific content was deemed not suitable for posting.
- H. All requests for information pursuant to the Texas Public Information Act shall be submitted in accordance with the methods designated by the City on its website www.breckenridgetx.gov
- I. Users found to be in continuous violation of the rules above may be barred from accessing the City's social media accounts after review from the City Manager.
- J. You are subject to the Terms of Service (TOS) of the host site. Information (photos, videos, etc.) you share with or post to official City of Breckenridge accounts is also subject to the TOS of the host site and may be used by the owners of the host site for their own purposes. For more information, consult the host website's TOS.

Public-Created Content

Users are welcome to post content, including photographs and videos, to an official City of Breckenridge account where the agency allows users to post content, the content meets the standards articulated in this Public Use Policy and pertains to the subject of the social media account. Users may only post their own, original content. Reproduced or borrowed content that reasonably appears to violate third party rights will be deleted.

This social media Public Use Policy is subject to amendment or modification at any time to ensure its use remains current and consistent with its intended purpose to provide a public forum.

SECURITY & LEGAL ISSUES

Privacy Policy

Any individual accessing, browsing or using a City of Breckenridge social media account accepts, without limitation or qualification, the City's Social Media Policies. The City of Breckenridge maintains the right to modify these Policies without notice. The continued use of a City of Breckenridge social media account following the posting of any modification signifies acceptance of such modification.

All users of City of Breckenridge's social media accounts are subject to the platform's Privacy Policy. The City of Breckenridge has no control over a third-party site's privacy policy or its modifications to it. The City of Breckenridge also has no control over content, commercial advertisements or other postings produced by the social media platform that might appear on the City of Breckenridge's social media accounts as part of the platform's environment.

The City of Breckenridge operates and maintains its social media accounts as a public service to provide information about City programs, services, projects, issues, events and activities. The City of Breckenridge assumes no liability for any inaccuracies these social media accounts may contain and does not guarantee that the social media accounts will be uninterrupted, permanent or error-free.

Only public information will be posted by the City of Breckenridge on the City's social media accounts. If communication that takes place on the City's social media accounts involves or requires private information, communication will be redirected through other appropriate channels. Postings from the public on the City's social media accounts become public records and may be posted on the City's websites. This information may be subject to public information requests. For more information about public information requests, please refer to the Texas.gov Public Information Requests policy.

The City of Breckenridge is not responsible for content posted by others to the City's social media accounts. Users that enter personal information on the City's social media accounts do so at their own risk; the City is not responsible for the public display of such private information. The City of Breckenridge may remove postings to its social media accounts that contain personally identifiable information, but the City is not responsible for any damages caused by delays in such removal.

Terms of Service

The City of Breckenridge social media accounts are third party sites and have terms of service and policies that are not governed by the City of Breckenridge or the State of Texas. These third-party sites are not City of Breckenridge websites and the third-party's website terms of service and policies apply.

Copyright Policy

All information and materials generated by the City of Breckenridge and provided on City of Breckenridge social media accounts are the property of the City of Breckenridge. The City retains copyright on all text, graphic images and other content produced by the City of Breckenridge. You may print copies of information and material for your own non-commercial use, provided you retain the copyright symbol or other such proprietary notice intact on any copyrighted materials. Please include a credit line reading: "credit: City of Breckenridge Facebook (or X or Instagram) Account" or "Courtesy of City of Breckenridge."

Commercial use of text, City logos, photos and other graphics is prohibited without the written permission of the City of Breckenridge. Use of the City logo is prohibited for any non-governmental purpose. Any person reproducing or redistributing a third-party copyright must adhere to the terms and conditions of the third-party copyright holder. If you are a copyright holder and you feel that the City of Breckenridge did not use an appropriate credit line please notify the City Manager or designee with detailed information about the circumstances, so that the copyright information can be added or the material in question can be removed.

DISCLAIMER

When possible, official City of Breckenridge social media accounts must include a Disclaimer that contains the following information:

"The City of Breckenridge maintains this social media account to provide information and promote City of Breckenridge programs, services, policies and objectives. It is the City's goal to keep the most current and accurate information available to the public on this account, however, varying events can occur that could affect the timeliness of the information and the accuracy of the content.

Comments posted on this account by the public will be monitored and any postings or comments that do not adhere to the City of Breckenridge Social Media Policy will be deleted without notice. Public comments posted on this site are not the official opinion or represent the official position of the City. To contact the City of Breckenridge, please refer to www.breckenridgetx.gov.

This account may contain links to other websites and resources as a convenience to the viewer. Links to third party sites/pages are not under the control of, nor maintained by, the City Breckenridge and the City is not responsible for the content of these sites. In addition,

the inclusion of a linked site/page does not constitute an endorsement or promotion by the City of Breckenridge.

Find the complete City of Breckenridge Social Media Policy [HERE](#).