

	Website and Social Media Policy	
	Section No: 2.11	
	Category: Workplace Conduct and Compliance	
	Resolution Number: 257-2026	
	Effective Date: September 1, 2026	
	Supersedes: former Section 38, Resolution 2023-106 – November 1, 2022	
	Next Review Date: September 1, 2028	
Responsible Office: Information Technology and Communications		
Policy Applies to:	☒ All City employees (Full-time, Part-time, LSEs, temps, etc.) ☐ All City and School Employees	☐ Full-Time employees only ☐ Other: _____

Relevant Definitions

N/A

Policy

This policy provides guidance for employee use of social media, which should be broadly understood to include City websites, blogs, electronic newsletters, social networking sites, and other sites and services that permit users to share information.

All City of Kingsport social media channels must adhere to applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies including the Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy.

Any violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment in accordance with city policy.

Website and/or Social Media Page Approval and Registration

All requests for departmental webpages, websites, and social media channels are to be approved by the Public Information and Communications Department.

The Public Information and Communications Department must have administrative privileges over all websites and social media channels.

To maintain transparency, security and clear responsibility:

- A maximum of three users per department is allowed access on each approved page.
- The creation and use of “dummy,” shared, or generic social media accounts for employees to collectively use and share information is prohibited. Employees managing a social media account must use that account with their real profile account.

All domain names must be registered by the Public Information and Communications Department or be transferred to the city domain registrar. All department-specific websites must reference the city privacy statement and ADA statement on the City's official website.

Guidelines for City Departmental Websites and Social Media Accounts

The content of the City of Kingsport departmental websites and social media must pertain to city sponsored or endorsed programs, services, events, or other content as approved by the Public Information and Communications Department. The city reserves the right to restrict any content that is deemed to be inappropriate or inconsistent with this policy. Content prohibited on the city's departmental websites and social media sites include, but is not limited to, the items listed below:

- personal information;
- language that is profane, obscene, threatening, or harassing;
- obscene images;
- content that promotes, fosters, disparages, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability status, national origin, physical and mental disability, or veteran status;
- content meant to threaten or defame any person or organization;
- content that is hateful, incites violence, or is harassing;
- conduct of illegal activity;
- sexual content or links to sexual content;
- solicitation of commerce, including but not limited to, advertising of any business or product for sale;
- information that may compromise the safety or securing of the public or public system;
- links to third party sites and platforms (except with prior approval from the Public Information & Communications Department); or
- content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

Employees must not post any content to a city's departmental website, webpage, or social media channel for their financial gain or for the financial gain of any other person or entity. A City employee posting on a City departmental website or social media channel must take reasonable care not to disclose any confidential information in any posting.

The Public Information and Communications department may direct departments to modify social media content based on best practices and industry norms.

Rights and permissions must be secured prior to posting, sharing, or distributing copyrighted materials.

Public Records

City departmental websites and social media outlets are subject to the Tennessee Public Records Act (Tenn. Code Ann §10-7-101 *et seq*). City departmental websites and social media channels must comply with all other applicable city policies.

City departmental websites and social media sites are subject to review and deletion by the City's Public Information and Communication Department, to the extent permitted by law.

Personal Social Media Use

Employees may not use the City of Kingsport seal or logo on any personal social media channel (profile pictures, post, etc.). Employee's personal social media accounts may be subject to monitoring without notice or consent.

In situations where an employee's social media usage is threatening, discriminatory, harassing, or retaliatory in nature directed at the City or another employee, disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment may be merited.

When using their personal social media account, city employees are still subject to the City's Discrimination and Harassment Policy. **Employees may identify the City as their employer or include their City position in their social media profile; however, employees should understand that identifying themselves as a City employee may cause others to reasonably perceive their statements, opinions, or endorsements as representing the views or position of the City. Accordingly, employees should not use their City title, position, uniform, logo, or other City affiliation in a manner that could reasonably create the impression that they are speaking on behalf of the City unless expressly authorized to do so. City employees may not make statements, speeches, appearances, or endorsements, or publish any materials that could reasonably be interpreted as representing the views, positions, or official business of the City without the express authorization of the Public Information and Communications Department.**

City employees may not make any statements, speeches, appearances, and endorsements; or publish any materials that could reasonably be considered to represent the views or positions of the City without the express authorization from the Public Information and Communications Department.

City employees are to fully engage in their work responsibilities and to refrain from using social media during those hours unless the use of social media is related to city business.

Consequences of Policy Violation

Violations of this policy may result in corrective action, up to and including termination of employment, in accordance with the City's Corrective Action Policy.

Related Information or Procedures:

N/A

Other Provisions:

Nothing in this policy should be construed to conflict with or supersede state or federal law, or as interfering with the constitutional rights of employees.

While the city is committed to the principles embodied in this policy, the policy itself is not intended to state contractual terms and does not constitute a contract between the city and its employees. Furthermore, this statement constitutes ONLY the policy of the city. A finding of a violation of this policy does not mean that the conduct violates state and/or federal laws.

Contacts

The Human Resources Office can address questions regarding this Policy: phone: (423) 229-9401, email: HROffice@kingsporttn.gov