

# Social Media Policy



## Purpose:

This policy establishes guidelines for the establishment and use of social media sites by the City of Belton (including but not limited to Facebook and Twitter) as a means of conveying City information to the public.

The intended purpose behind establishing City of Belton social media sites is to disseminate information from the City, about the City, to its citizens.

The City of Belton has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is “spoken” on behalf of the City on City social media sites.

For purposes of this policy: “social media” is understood to be content created by individuals, using accessible, expandable, and upgradable publishing technologies, through and on the Internet. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to: Facebook, blogs, RSS, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Delicious, Foursquare and Flickr. For purposes of this policy: “comments” include information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communication content posted on a City of Belton social media site.

## General Policy:

1. The establishment and use by any City department of City social media sites is subject to approval by the City Manager or his/her designee. All City of Belton social media sites shall be administered by City of Belton Public Information staff or department heads specifically approved by the City Manager.
2. City social media sites should make clear that they are maintained by the City of Belton and that they follow the City’s Social Media Policy.
3. Wherever possible, City social media sites should link back to the official City of Belton website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business with the City of Belton.
4. The Public Information Officer will 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 of Belton.
5. The City reserves the right to restrict or remove content that violates its Social Media Policy or any applicable law.
6. These policies must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink.
7. The City will approach the use of social media tools as consistently as possible, entity wide.
8. The City of Belton’s website at [www.beltontexas.gov](http://www.beltontexas.gov) will remain the City’s primary and predominant internet presence.
9. All City social media sites shall adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies.
10. City social media sites are subject to the Texas Public Information Act. Any content maintained in a social media format, including a list of subscribers, posted communication, and communication submitted for posting, may be a public record subject to public disclosure.
11. Comments on topics or issues not within the jurisdictional purview of the City of Belton may be removed.

12. Employees representing the City government via City social media sites must conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the City and in accordance with all City policies.
13. This Social Media Policy may be revised at any time.

## Comment Policy:

1. As a public entity the City must abide by certain standards to serve all its constituents in a civil and unbiased manner.
2. The intended purpose for establishing City of Belton social media sites is to disseminate information from the City, about the City, to its citizens.
3. Comments containing any of the following inappropriate forms of content shall **not** be permitted on City of Belton social media sites and are subject to removal and/or restriction by the Public Information Officer or his/her designee:
  - a. Comments not related to the original topic, including random or unintelligible comments;
  - b. Profane, obscene, violent, or pornographic content and/or language;
  - c. Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, or national origin;
  - d. Defamatory or personal attacks;
  - e. Threats to any person or organization;
  - f. Comments in support of, or in opposition to, any political campaigns or ballot measures;
  - g. Solicitation of commerce, including but not limited to advertising of any business or product for sale;
  - h. Conduct in violation of any federal, state or local law;
  - i. Encouragement of illegal activity;
  - j. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
  - k. Content that violates a legal ownership interest, such as a copyright, of any party.
4. A comment posted by a member of the public on any City of Belton social media site is the opinion of the commentator or poster only, and publication of a comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by, the City of Belton, nor do such comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the City of Belton.
5. The City of Belton reserves the right to deny access to City of Belton social media sites for any individual, who violates the City of Belton's Social Media Policy, at any time and without prior notice.
6. Departments shall monitor their social media sites for comments requesting responses from the City and for comments in violation of this policy.
7. When a City of Belton employee responds to a comment, in his/her capacity as a City of Belton employee, the employee's name and title should be made available, and the employee shall not share personal information about himself or herself, or other City employees.
8. All comments posted to any City of Belton Facebook site are bound by Facebook's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, located at <http://www.facebook.com/terms.php>, and the City of Belton reserves the right to report any violation of Facebook's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities to Facebook with the intent of Facebook taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action.