

EMPLOYEE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

An employee's use of social media, both on and off duty must not interfere with or conflict with the employee's duties or job performance, reflect negatively on the City or violate any City of Ballinger policy, including the City of Ballinger Personnel Policies and Procedures. The intent of these standards is to regulate the creation and distribution of information concerning the City, its employees and citizens through electronic media, including, but not limited to online forums, instant messaging and internet social media and blogging sites. Protecting the City's reputation and ensuring that an employee's communication with people outside the City, not only reflects positively on the employee as an individual, but also on the City.

Personal use of the Internet is a privilege and carries responsibilities requiring responsible and ethical use. The City may monitor an employee's access, use, and postings to the Internet, including from personal computers, to ensure compliance with internal policies, support the performance of internal investigations, assist management of information systems, and for all other lawful purposes. The City expects all employees to follow the Guidelines below when posting information on the Internet, regardless if done during or after work hours. This policy encompasses: wikis, tweets and twittering, Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, blogs, and other online journals and diaries; bulletin boards and chat rooms, microblogging and all other social networking sites, instant messaging and the posting of video on YouTube and similar media, as well as City-operated networks.

This policy should be read and interpreted in conjunction with other City policies, including but not limited to, policies prohibiting harassment, discrimination, offensive conduct or inappropriate behavior and the City's Electronic Communications policy. Violations of the City's Social Networking Policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Employee Guidelines

- Any blogging or posting information on the Internet, must comply with the City's guidelines (as listed below), regardless of where the blogging or posting is done.
- Blogging, or posting information of a personal nature on the Internet, is prohibited during work hours. Employees are not permitted to engage in social networking while using any of the city's electronic resources, unless you are making postings on the City official website as part of your job duties.
- Never disclose any confidential information concerning another employee of the City in a blog or other posting to the Internet. Posting of confidential information may violate state law and subject the user to criminal penalty. All requests for City documents must be processed through the Public Information Act.
- Employees must abide by all federal and state law and policies of the City with regard to information sent through the internet.

- If the employee's social networking includes any information related to the City, the employee must make it clear to the readers that the views expressed are the employee's alone and not reflective of the views of the City.
- Employees must obtain written authorization from the City Manager or the IT Director to update or post on behalf of the City and all content must be approved prior to posting. In which case the employee must disclose their relationship to the City in accordance with FTC guidelines. All of the employee's time spent updating or posting on behalf of the City and as part of the employee's job duties is compensable time that must be reported and counted in the calculation of overtime.
- No use of wikis, tweets and twittering, Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, blogs, and other online journals and diaries; bulletin boards and chat rooms, microblogging and all other social networking sites, instant messaging and the posting of video on YouTube and similar media, as well as City-operated networks is considered private or confidential even if password protected or otherwise restricted. The City reserves the right to access, intercept, monitor and review all information accessed, posted, sent, stored, printed or received through its communications systems or equipment at any time.
- Employees are encouraged to act responsibly on and off duty, and to exercise good judgment when using social media.
- Respect coworkers and the City. Do not put anything on your blog or post any information and/or pictures on the Internet that may defame, embarrass, insult, demean or damage the reputation of the City or any of its employees.
- Do not put anything in your blog or post any information and/or pictures that may constitute violation of the City's Harassment policy. Do not post any pornographic pictures of any type that could identify you as an employee of the City.
- Do not post pictures of yourself or others containing images of City uniforms or insignia, City logos, City equipment or City work sites, unless you are posting them on the City official website as part of your job duties.
- Do not post information on the Internet that could adversely impact the City and/or an employee of the City.
- Do not permit or fail to remove postings violating this policy, even when placed by others on the employee's blog. Recognize that postings, even if done off premises and while off duty could have an adverse effect on the City's legitimate business interests.
- Individual supervisors do not have the authority to make exceptions to these guidelines.