

City of Stillwater Employee Social Media Policy

Social media, including networking sites and blogs, are increasing in popularity and activity. The City of Stillwater (“City”) believes that social media can assist in raising visibility and support for its business. The City is also aware that social media is not used exclusively for the City’s business and that employees are utilizing blogs and social networking sites for personal use. However, it is important to keep in mind that what is posted is traceable and permanent.

When employees create their own blogs, comment on a blog, create a LinkedIn profile, Twitter/X, use Facebook, Instagram, and/or contribute to or through any of the other online media (i.e., Wikis, blogs, chat rooms, Internet forums, electronic mailing lists, etc.), they are impacting their personal image and potentially impacting the City. If your online profile indicates that you work for the City, then that activity is associated with the City. Therefore, the City asks all employees to follow the guidelines below regarding online behavior.

The sites covered in this policy include any electronic form of communication, including social networking sites such as Facebook and Instagram; professional networking sites such as LinkedIn; and live blogging tools like Twitter/X, as well as employee’s personal blogs and those hosted by other organizations that you either author or where you post comments.

Social Media Use Guidelines:

Follow these guidelines when creating and/or publishing work-related or non-work-related content online:

1. **Maintain confidentiality.** Never divulge proprietary or confidential information about the City, our employees, or our clients.
2. **Represent yourself accurately.** If you are participating in an online community or commenting on topics related to City business, you must make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the City.
3. **Be accurate.** When posting content, your overall goal should be to provide value through accurate information. You may not post anything that is knowingly false.
4. **Be respectful.** Respect the opinions of others. You may have disagreements, but please make your opinions respectfully. The City does not tolerate intimidating or threatening comments.

Please keep the following guidelines in mind regarding your online identity:

1. Follow the rules regarding the use of City email outlined in the City’s Personnel Policies.
2. Even when using social media sites on a personal basis, please remember to follow the City’s policies prohibiting threats and intimidation.
3. The City is not interested in limiting your ability to participate in personal social networks with a personal email address outside of the workplace. However, what you publish on these sites should never be attributed to the City. Please make it clear that you are speaking for yourself. Furthermore, even if you do not mention the City, that information is readily ascertainable and could reflect poorly upon you and the City. Please use common sense when making online comments, even if you intend for them only to be personal in nature. If you choose to use your work affiliation on a social network, then you should regard all communication on that network as you would in a professional network.
4. Be aware of your association with the City in online social networks. If you identify yourself as a City employee, ensure your profile, photographs, and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues and clients.
5. As they are in the public domain, the City reserves the right to monitor social media sites and blogs.
6. Any violators of this Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.