

City of Hickory
Use of Personal Web Pages, Social Networking Websites, and "Blogs"
Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish policies and procedures related to the use of electronic technology, including City approved sites, personal web pages, internet postings, social networking websites, weblogs "blogs", and recording or broadcasting devices by City coworkers and to ensure such usage is not detrimental to other City coworkers or the City organization. All content posted on social media is subject to all City policies.

2. Definitions

For the purpose of this administrative procedure, the following terms are defined as provided below:

- A. Personal Web Page – World Wide Web pages created by an individual to contain content of a personal nature. The content can be about that person or about something in which he or she is interested.
- B. Non-personal Web Pages – World Wide Web pages created by an companies or organizations to contain content pertaining to that entity. This includes, but is not limited to media sites (such as Hickory Daily Record, CNN, MSNBC, FOX News, local media pages, Yahoo, etc.).
- C. Social Networking Site – an internet site specifically focused on the building and verifying of social networks with the ability to create groups that share common interests or affiliations, upload files including pictures, music or videos, hold discussions in forums and/or host Weblogs ("blogs") for members of the site. Professional Networking sites and list serv sites which are used for the sole purpose of sharing professional information, policies and ideas are not considered "social networking" sites. (Examples of social media include, but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, blogs, YouTube, Second Life, Delicious, Flickr, MySpace, Pinterest, media pages, etc.).
- D. Original Content – Information, photos, videos, documents and anything that City of Hickory co-workers have created while employed with the City of Hickory for purposes of promoting, explaining, informing the public, and documenting work of the City of Hickory.
- E. Weblog ("blog") – a web-based publication where users post informal journals on their thoughts, comments and philosophies based on the views of its creator. Weblogs are generally referred to as "blogs".

3. Procedures

A. Guidelines for City of Hickory Social Media Sites (acting as Administrators on City sites)

- 1. All City of Hickory social media sites shall be (1) approved by the Communications Director/Specialist and the requesting Department Head or his/her designee; (2) published using approved City social media platforms and tools; and (3) administered by the

Communications Director/Specialist or the designee of the requesting Department Head. Designees can be any department employee designated by the requesting Department Head that has a complete understanding of this policy and has appropriate content and technical experience. See Exhibit A.

2. All City of Hickory social media sites shall adhere to applicable City, State, and Federal laws, regulations and policies including Information Technology and Records Management, public record, and e-discovery.
3. City of Hickory social media sites are subject to the North Carolina public records laws and records retention laws.
4. All City social media sites shall clearly indicate that all content posted or submitted for posting is subject to public disclosure.
5. When dealing with a complaint, the complaining party shall be directed to the appropriate staff person via email or phone to better serve the resident and resolve the issue.
6. Content must reflect the City's official position on topics, not an employee's personal view. The content and records maintenance of each City of Hickory social media site shall be the sole responsibility of the department producing and using it.
7. Each City of Hickory social media site shall include an introductory statement which clearly identifies the site as an official site of the City of Hickory. Where possible, social media sites are to link back to the official City of Hickory website for forms, documents, and other information or correspondence.
8. All City of Hickory social media sites shall clearly indicate they are maintained by the City of Hickory and shall have City of Hickory contact information prominently displayed.
9. City of Hickory social media sites must be "family friendly". All content and comments containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed and shall be removed by the site's administrator, who may also ban that person from further posting:
 - a. Profane language or content
 - b. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the 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
 - c. Sexual content or links to sexual content
 - d. Solicitations of commerce
 - e. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity
 - f. S p a m
 - g. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems
 - h. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party

The following forms of content may be removed at the discretion of the site's administrator:

- a. Comments not specifically about the posting or blog article being commented upon
 - b. Content posted by anonymous posters or those using a fake moniker
10. Where appropriate, City Information Technology (IT) security policies shall apply to all social media sites.

11. The Communications Director/Specialist shall provide training to all City social media moderators/ administrators regarding the terms of this City of Hickory's administrative procedure, including their responsibilities to review content submitted for posting to ensure compliance with the policy.

B. Use of Social Media as a City employee on City sites

The City of Hickory understands that online social media has become a common form of communication. Employees who choose to participate in online social media should adhere to the following guidelines.

Items and comments posted on the Internet live on forever and could have serious repercussions on employment as well as the City of Hickory's image and/or ability to provide quality services to our residents. The following guidelines apply to the use of social media as a City employee:

1. Departments have the option of allowing employees to participate in approved social media sites as part of their job duties. Department Heads may allow or disallow employee participation in any social media activities in their departments.
2. Use of a City e-mail address and communicating in the official capacity of a City position will constitute conducting City business.
3. City policies, rules, regulations, and standards of conduct apply to employees who engage in social media activities while conducting City business.
4. Employees representing the City government via social media sites must conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the City and in accordance with all personnel administrative and operating procedures and policies.
5. Protect personal privacy, the privacy of citizens, and the information the City holds. Follow all privacy protection laws, e.g., HIPPA, and protect sensitive and confidential City information.
6. Do not disclose any information that would jeopardize the safety of City staff or the disclosure of personal or confidential information.
7. Protect sensitive information that could jeopardize ongoing City activities and investigations, particularly in Police and Fire/Rescue.
8. Follow all copyright laws, public records laws, retention laws, fair use and financial disclosure laws, and any others laws that might apply to the City or a functional area of the City.
9. Do not cite vendors, suppliers, citizens, co-workers, or other stakeholders without their approval. Further, employees shall not promote or endorse or criticize any vendor, contractor, or supplier. Any social media content must be neutral in that regard.
10. Do not use ethnic slurs, profanity, personal insults, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the City's workplace. Avoid comments or topics that

may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.

11. Use good writing basics such as grammar and spelling.
12. Correct mistakes and do not alter previous posts without indicating that a change has been made. Frame any comments or opposing views in a positive manner. If there are questions about how to do this, contact the Communications Director/Specialist for guidance.
13. Add value to the City of Hickory through your interaction. Provide worthwhile information and perspective.
14. Use of social media that involves any kind of criminal activity or harms the rights of others may result in criminal prosecution or civil liability to those harmed, or both.
15. Coworkers violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

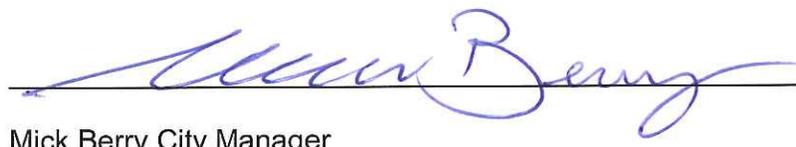
C. Use of Social Media on Personal Sites

The City of Hickory fully supports the right of coworkers to have personal web pages or to participate in social networking sites and/or weblogs (blogs) while not on duty. How a coworker uses social media is not a matter of concern, as long as it is consistent with the guidelines outlined in this policy.

1. If an individual/group posts comments about City business on your personal site, please refer them to the official City sites, phone numbers or email addresses. Use of a personal site for City business will likely make that site subject to the same public disclosure and other standards as the City's official business social media sites.
2. Coworkers shall not post photographs or other depictions of work related sites, equipment, activities, or duties without authorization. Coworkers shall not misappropriate or use the City's brand, logo, or slogan without authorization from Department Head and/or his/her authorized designee. However, coworkers may share such information found on social media networking sites officially sponsored or endorsed by the City of Hickory and listed on Exhibit B.
3. Any conduct which is impermissible under the law, if expressed in any other form or forum, is impermissible if expressed through personal social media outlets. For example, posted material that is discriminatory, obscene, defamatory, libelous, or malicious is prohibited.
4. Coworkers shall not post, transmit, reproduce, share, and/or disseminate information (text, pictures, video, audio, etc.) to the internet or any other forum (public or private) that
 - a. has the potential or effect of involving the coworker, their fellow coworkers, or the City in any kind of dispute or conflict with other coworkers or third parties,
 - b. has the effect of impairing the work of another coworker,
 - c. violates the City's Anti-Harassment Policy,
 - d. disrupts the smooth and orderly flow of work within the organization or the delivery of services to the City's citizens,
 - e. discredits or harms the goodwill and reputation of the City among its citizens or in the community at large,

- f. erodes public confidence in the City's organization, or
 - g. tends to place in doubt the reliability, trustworthiness, or sound judgment of the person who is the originator or subject of the information, or
 - h. Do not disclose any information that would jeopardize the safety of City staff or the disclosure of personal or confidential information.
5. Coworkers violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
6. All content posted on City approved and personal social media sites, personal web pages, and "blogs" is subject to all other City policies, as well as this policy, including, but not limited to, the Personnel Ordinance, the Anti-Harassment Policy, and the City of Hickory Ethics Policy & Procedure.

This policy is effective 11/4/15.


Mick Berry City Manager



Life. Well Crafted.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Date Requested: _____

Requested By: _____

Department or Group: _____

Phone/Ext.: _____

Email: _____

Social Media Requested: *(check all that apply)* Page Name Requested:

Facebook _____

Twitter _____

Instagram _____

LinkedIn _____

Social Media Request Description and Intent of Use:

Page Administrators: (List all names and email addresses)

Approved by

Name

Signature

Date

Department Head or City Liaison

Communications Specialist and/or Director

EXHIBIT B – Approved City of Hickory Social Media Accounts

The list below are the current approved City of Hickory social media sites. This list is subject to change.

Facebook:

City of Hickory, NC – Government
Hickory Public Library
Hickory Police Department - Official
City of Hickory Parks and Recreation
Mick Berry (Hickory City Manager)
Hickory Fire Department (approved, but not operating yet)

Twitter:

@CityofHickory
@HickoryWellCrafted
@HickoryCityMgr
@LegisCmo (Yaidee Fox maintains)
@HPLNC (Hickory Public Library)
@HickoryPD (Hickory Police Department)

Instagram:

HickoryWellCrafted
HickoryNC

YouTube:

City of Hickory

LinkedIn:

Human Resources

Professional Citizen Engagement site:

MindMixer/Crafting Hickory

