

City of Green Cove Springs External Social Media Policy

Purpose: The City of Green Cove Springs maintains social media channels to streamline communications with the public, provide transparency on city projects, policy and utilities, keep the public up to date with city meetings and events, and become the first line of communication in the event of an emergency.

Definitions:

Social Media Channels: is the term that refers to internet-based digital communication platforms that integrate user-generated content and user participation to share information, opinion and other content such as photos, videos, articles, and other publications. Social media channels may include but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, etc.

Social Media Account: shall mean any registration, login credential, tool, forum, website or network that is created or maintained by an employee on behalf of City of Green Cove Springs for the purpose of establishing or perpetuating a social media presence.

Page: the specific portion of a social media website where content is displayed and managed by an individual or individuals with administrator rights.

Post: shall mean any e-mail, message, picture, graphic, image, advertisement, notification, feed, stream, transmission, broadcast, podcast, video, instant message, text message, blog, microblog, status update, wall post, comment, and any and all other forms, means, or attempts at collaboration or communication that is uploaded, posted to, or otherwise displayed on or transmitted by, any Social Media Account or Network.

Authorized User: shall mean any employee who has been authorized by the City Manager to establish, create, edit, or maintain any social media account, and the posts it may contain, in the transaction of official business of the City of Green Cove Springs.

Scope: This policy covers the social media channels that the City currently maintains, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, as well as new social media channels and programs that the City adopts in the future.

Roles and Responsibilities: This section of the policy covers the use of social media platforms by the City of Green Cove Springs employees.

Roles: Authorized social media users include the City of Green Cove Springs Communication Coordinator, City Manager and Network Administrator. This is to ensure that messages from the City on social media remain professional and consistent.

Responsibility: The City of Green Cove Springs Communications Coordinator is responsible for monitoring content and comments on all city maintained social media channels.

The City of Green Cove Springs official social media accounts will be used for providing information and transparency on the topics of city policy, City Council business, accomplishments, events, programs, news and announcements, to encourage social engagement with city residents, and for emergency alerts as well as information about various City boards and committees. The Communications Coordinator will work with the City Clerk to make sure that all posts are archived and comply with Florida Public Records Laws.

Content: Each post from the City on any of the City’s social media channels should be treated as an official statement from the City of Green Cove Springs. Content needs to have a professional tone, clearly communicating facts and impact of each policy decision, city program, announcement, and any City Council business. The tone can also be conversational when talking about any awards that the City or city employees receive and talking about upcoming City events or Parks and Recreation Programming.

When posting a link, video, or photo, there must be text in the post to give context and direction to the link, video or photo posted. Credit of who took the photo or video must also be included with the post.

Understand that any published content is in the public domain. When speaking on behalf of the City, it should be assumed that all communications are in the public domain and available for publishing and discussion in all forms of media. All content posted by authorized users should represent the City’s point of view, not the point of view of individual employees.

The City will not use its social media channels to promote a private business, nor will the city “like” or “follow” any social media pages of a private business. The City may only “like” or “follow” pages and social media accounts of other counties and municipalities, state and federal agencies, local and regional law enforcement, and local community groups, nonprofits, charitable, and civic clubs.

The City may only promote other events and programs run by Clay County, Clay municipalities, state and federal agencies, local and regional law enforcement, and local community groups, nonprofits, charitable, and civic clubs, or as further authorized by the City Manager. The City may also promote events that the City co-sponsors with a single person or community organization.

City Social Media Accounts – General Procedures

Establishing Social Media Accounts

All City social media accounts will be approved by the Communications Coordinator and City Manager before becoming established online. Approval includes establishing authorized users of the social media account. This is to ensure consistent messaging and information is broadcast across all City Channels.

Procedures When Establishing and Maintaining a City Social Media Account

Include an introductory statement that clearly specifies the purpose and topical scope of the social media presence, and have the relevant City department's contact information prominently displayed. Where possible, department social media accounts should link back to City's official website.

Post the "Public Comments" and "Notice of Public Record" either directly on the social media site or as a link to the PDFs of both on the City Website. The agreement, in addition to its other language, shall clearly indicate that any post is subject to public records disclosure.

Enable features for public comments, if such capability exists, and comply with and enforce the posted Terms of Use agreement.

Make available to the Information Systems Department all content such as text, images, and video placed on social media accounts.

Maintain compliance with all applicable Federal, State, and City requirements, as well as policies and procedures relating to records retention and public records requests.

Accessibility

All content posted on the City website and City social media pages should be made accessible to be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Compliance includes the following:

Use as little hashtags as possible, and when writing hashtags, abbreviations, or acronyms in a post use camel case (capitalizing the first letter of every word without separating words with spaces or punctuation).

Utilize plain text in all social media posts. This means using words that are common and easy to understand, writing in clear, short sentences and writing in the active voice.

When possible, spell out acronyms in the first instance it is used in a post. This will help those using text readers to better understand the agency that the acronym identifies.

Add captions to all photos posted. A simple caption describing the scene of the photo or how elements are arranged in a graphic will allow users who are sight impaired to better mentally visualize the entire post and better understand the message of the post.

Provide closed captioning, or access to captioning, with every video posted.

Public Comments:

The City of Green Cove Springs uses social media to interact with residents, businesses and visitors about public issues, city programs and events and policy. Please note that this is a moderated online discussion site and is subject to Florida Public Records Laws.

The City reserves the right to delete unacceptable submissions, after they have been archived for public record. The following are examples of unacceptable social networking content and comments. The list is not intended to be all-inclusive. Examples are:

Profane or obscene language or content;

Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetrates discrimination on the basis of race, color, disabilities, religion, sex, national origin, or age, or any other constitutionally protected right;

Solicitations of commerce;

Conduct of illegal activity;

Infringement of copyrights or trademarks;

Confidential or non-public information; and

Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.

Please note that the opinions and comments expressed by others on the City’s social media platforms do not reflect the opinions and positions of the City of Green Cove Springs, its officers, employees, or City Council members.

Notice of Public Record

Any communication via City’s social media platforms (whether by a City Employee or the public) are subject to monitoring and disclosure to third parties. In other words, all content posted or submitted for posting to the City’s social media platforms is subject to public disclosure. Relevant City of Green Cove Springs and Florida public records retention schedules apply to social networking content. Records required to be maintained pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule shall be maintained for the required retention period in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record.