

# City of Monticello Social Media Policy

---

## **Purpose**

The City of Monticello uses social media to serve two primary functions: to communicate messages directly to the public and to encourage public involvement, interaction, and feedback. Information distributed via social media sites will be accurate, consistent, timely, and communicated in a professional manner. The city's use of these sites will be in accordance with federal, state, and local laws regarding public records and data practices.

The city has limited control of social media accounts with third parties (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, etc.). However, there is a general public expectation that the city will have a social media presence to share information. The city's social media accounts will be used for incidental, non-vital communication and general information only. It is not the purpose of the city's social media accounts to be a medium for transactions of city business. The one exception is in the case of a natural or man-made disaster, if the city determines that the best means of communicating with the public is through social media account(s).

This policy seeks to ensure proper administration of the City of Monticello's social media accounts by its representatives. City representatives are responsible for operating the city's social media resources in an efficient, effective, ethical, and lawful manner pursuant to all existing city policies.

## **Policy**

The City of Monticello will determine, at its discretion, how its social media resources will be designed, implemented, and managed as part of its overall communication strategy.

City of Monticello social media accounts are considered a city asset and management, access and use of these accounts will be securely administered in accordance with the city's policies. The city reserves the right to shut down any of its social media sites or accounts for any reason without notice.

All social media accounts created and utilized during the course and scope of an employee's performance of their job duties will be identified as belonging to the City of Monticello. The City of Monticello does not create or maintain social media accounts for its elected officials.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to any existing or proposed social media accounts sponsored, established, registered, or authorized by the City of Monticello. The city's social media accounts are exclusively the following:

### **Facebook**

1. City of Monticello: [www.facebook.com/cityofmonticello](http://www.facebook.com/cityofmonticello)
2. Monticello Fire Department: [www.facebook.com/montifire](http://www.facebook.com/montifire)
3. Hi-Way Liquors: [www.facebook.com/hiway.liquors.mn](http://www.facebook.com/hiway.liquors.mn)
4. Monticello Community Center: [www.facebook.com/monticellocommunitycenter](http://www.facebook.com/monticellocommunitycenter)
5. Monticello Farmers Market: [www.facebook.com/montimarket](http://www.facebook.com/montimarket)
6. FiberNet Monticello: [www.facebook.com/fibernetmonticello](http://www.facebook.com/fibernetmonticello)
7. Monti Arts Initiative: [www.facebook.com/montiarts](http://www.facebook.com/montiarts)

### **Twitter**

1. City of Monticello: [www.twitter.com/Monticello\\_MN](http://www.twitter.com/Monticello_MN)

2. FiberNet Monticello: [www.twitter.com/FiberNet\\_Tweets](http://www.twitter.com/FiberNet_Tweets)
3. Monti Arts Initiative: [www.twitter.com/montiarts1](http://www.twitter.com/montiarts1)

### **Instagram**

1. Monticello Community Center: [www.instagram.com/monticommcenter](http://www.instagram.com/monticommcenter)
2. Monticello Farmers Market: [www.instagram.com/monticellofarmersmarket](http://www.instagram.com/monticellofarmersmarket)
3. Monti Arts Initiative: [www.instagram.com/monti\\_arts](http://www.instagram.com/monti_arts)

The City does not create, collect, disseminate, or control the use of any other social media accounts, including the personal accounts of its elected officials and staff. Questions regarding the scope of this policy should be directed to the Communications Coordinator.

### **Definition**

Social media are internet and mobile-based applications, websites, and functions (other than email) for sharing information. Users can post photos, videos, comments, and links to other information to create content. This may be referred to as “user-generated content” or “consumer-generated content.”

Social media includes, but is not limited to:

- Social networking sites and apps such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and NextDoor
- Blogs
- Social news sites such as Reddit and BuzzFeed
- Video and photo sharing sites and apps such as YouTube, Instagram, SnapChat, TikTok, and Flickr
- Wikis, or shared encyclopedias, such as Wikipedia
- An ever-emerging list of new web-based platforms generally regarded as social media or having many of the same functions as those listed above

As used in this policy, “employees and agents” means all city representatives, including its employees and other agents of the City, such as independent contractors.

“Social media manager” means any city employee or agent with administrator access who, when posting or responding to a post, appears to the city social media account owner.

### **Rules of Use**

City employees and agents with administrator access are responsible for managing social media. All those granted administrator access must execute a Social Media Account Authorization Form and comply with city training, documentation and policy requirements.

Facilities or departments wishing to have a new social media presence must initially submit a request to the Communications Coordinator in order to ensure social media accounts are kept to a sustainable number and policies are followed. All approved sites will be clearly marked with the official name of the department and will be linked to the official city site. No one may establish social media accounts on behalf of the city unless authorized in accordance with this policy.

The city’s social media pages must conspicuously display or link to a public notice informing the public of the purpose of the social media presence and the terms one agrees to in accessing, using, or posting to the city’s social media page.

Administration of all social media accounts must comply with applicable laws, regulations, and policies as well as proper business and government etiquette.

City social media accounts covered by this policy will not be used by social media managers for private or personal purposes or for the purpose of expressing private or personal views on personal, political, or policy issues or to express personal views or concerns pertaining to city employment relations matters.

No city social media account may be used by the city or any social media manager to disclose private, confidential, or sensitive information. If there is any question as to whether information falls into any of these categories, please contact the City Clerk.

The use of social media is intended to supplement rather than replace existing forms of communication with the public. Outside of disaster situations, no city social media account will be used for transactions of city business. If a user initiates a request, application, or question through social media that affects city business or requires another city policy be followed, respond to that user by phone, email, or other channels. In the event of a general interest question, a response may be given in the comments, the initial post may be edited, or a subsequent post may be created to include the information.

The city recognizes the public has the ability to comment on social media postings; however, the sites affiliated with the city have not been created as public forums. City of Monticello social media managers will not edit any posted comments. However, comments posted by members of the public may be removed if they fall into at least one of the following categories:

- Obscene or pornographic content
- Direct threats to persons or property
- Material asserted to violate the intellectual property of another person
- Private, personal information about a person published without their consent
- Information that compromises a public safety security system
- Statutorily private, confidential, or nonpublic data
- Commercial promotions, spam, or off-topic
- Are potentially libelous
- Are prejudiced or hurtful remarks made toward any person or entity, including an ethnic, racial, or religious groups
- Contain vulgar language
- Advocate illegal activity
- Promote political organizations
- Violate laws regarding public information, open meetings, or data practices
- Hyperlinks to material that falls into one of the foregoing categories
- Do not support the goal of providing public information

Comments are periodically monitored and inappropriate material will be removed when identified. A copy of the removed content will be saved in a social media archive along with an explanation of the specific policy violation authorizing its removal.

A member of the public whose comment is removed may appeal the removal of the content and seek reconsideration of its removal by contacting the city in writing and explaining how the comment does not fall into one of the categories for removal. A written response should be provided as soon as reasonably possible.

A member of the public who disputes the legality of any portion of this policy may dispute the particular portion in writing. The city should acknowledge the claim promptly and, upon

consultation with the city attorney, respond to the claim concerning legality of the policy portion as soon as reasonably possible.

The comments expressed on City of Monticello social networking sites do not reflect the opinions or positions of the City of Monticello, its employees, advisory boards, or elected officials.

### **Data Ownership**

All communications or messages within social media accounts covered by this policy composed, sent, or received on city or personal equipment are the property of the city and will be subject to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. This law classifies certain information as available to the public upon request. As no transaction of city business shall be conducted through social media accounts (outside of disasters), in accordance with the city's records retention schedule, the city shall retain all social media messages only until read.

The City of Monticello also maintains the sole property rights to any image, video, or audio captured while a city employee is representing the city in any capacity.

This updated document replaces the previous social media policy adopted in 2017.