

**SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

# GOAL

To establish the City of Denison’s policy regarding the use of social media as a method of online communication and information sharing, and to outline methodologies for the use of social media.

# POLICY

This policy affects all City departments that use social media as an additional means to communicate with citizens and share information about department programs and services. This policy pertains only to official communication by the City. Employees not authorized to post on behalf of the City are individually responsible for their actions under the City’s Internet, Social Media and E-Mail Use Policy (see Employee Handbook).

# DEFINITIONS

Social media sites (“Sites”) are third-party Internet based communication tools which facilitate an environment of interactivity, user participation, and information sharing in multiple ways on topics of common interest. The following are currently approved platforms: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and NextDoor.

Social media uses various sites and applications to share information and provide additional avenues for communication with citizens. Recognizing that social media tools evolve and change, the responsibility of what tools to use for each department shall be determined and approved by the department director in consultation with the Director of Community Engagement.

# SOCIAL MEDIA SITE ADMINISTRATION

Official City of Denison Social Media Sites are listed below:

Facebook

City of Denison, Texas Government

Keep Denison Beautiful

Denison Texas Police Department

Denison Fire and Rescue

Denison Live

Denison Parks & Recreation

Denison Public Library

Discover Denison

\*Denison on Ice

\*Doc Holliday Festival

\*Bark and Paws

\*Texoma Health Foundation Park

\*Will be merging with other pages and closed down.

Facebook Specific:

The City of Denison accounts are hosted by Facebook. Therefore, in addition to this agreement, said account is also governed by a separate Privacy Policy and Statement of Rights and Responsibilities.

**Statement of Rights and Responsibilities:**

<http://www.facebook.com/terms.php?ref=pf>

Privacy Policy: <http://www.facebook.com/policy.php?ref=pfm>

Instagram

Denison Live

Denison Public Library Discover Denison

Twitter

City of Denison Denison Live

Denison Public Library

1. Individual departments may choose to maintain social media pages on approved platforms with the approval of the Director of Community Engagement. These departmental pages may be used to distribute information and interact with members of the public regarding the department’s programs and operations. Departmental pages are to be administered by the department director, or their designee(s), as the Social Media Editor (“Editor” or “Editors”). Departments participating in social media will participate in the Communication Committee. The Community Engagement department will work with each department to create department specific policies for posting and managing content, as well as user interaction and approval of Editors when not the Department Director. Each department is responsible for the management of their department’s social media usage, including content and level of interaction with other users of the designated social media site, but should be consistent with the policies, practices and messages of the Community Engagement department to ensure efficiency and organizational cohesion. Where applicable, departmental pages should be linked to the City’s main pages as maintained by the Community Engagement department. Individual employees are prohibited from maintaining a City affiliated page or site in their capacity as employees under this policy.
2. All City owned pages will include the following information: City Site Terms & Agreement

Welcome to the [INSERT PAGE NAME] page. The city utilizes social media as a tool to communicate, but it does not serve as the official record of the city and it is NOT monitored 24 hours a day.

This is an official City of Denison page. All postings on this site are considered public record and may be treated as such under the Texas Public Information Act. The page administrators will review all postings to evaluate their appropriateness for this forum. Decisions regarding the relevancy of postings to this page will be based on existing city policies regarding neutrality, promotion of private businesses and organizations, and other established criteria. We welcome your questions, thoughts, experiences and comments and look forward to what you have to say. However, postings that fit the following descriptions will be removed.

* Abusive or inappropriate language or statements, including remarks that negatively target a certain group or individual based on race or ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation
* Threaten or defame any person or organization
* Contain obscenities or are sexually explicit
* Do not show proper consideration for others' privacy or are considered likely to offend or provoke
* Do not stay on subject to the original post
* Are spam – i.e. repeatedly posting the same comment or comments that are simply advertising/promoting a service or product. If you wouldn't want to receive it yourself, don't post it.
* Are in violation of existing policies of the City of Denison.

The City of Denison reserves the right to not post or remove any comments at any time, for any reason. The intent of the site is focused on open two-way communication between the city and users of the site. If you have a comment or would like to report an inappropriate comment for us to review, send a private message to our page, or you may reach our offices at 903-465-2720 ext. 2030 during normal business hours.

Thank you for visiting the [INSERT PAGE NAME] Page.

For additional information about the City of Denison, please visit our website at [www.cityofdenison.com](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.cityofdenison.com%2F%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR1ybfESAzXju9oXC5CmCjNxwux_tUM_SbXh5Is8xKNJVRoTbtQQsDSWsYc&amp;h=AT2lciGr2tMsMW2dGt_zqJGen-h8Kf23Oxzstx_kwfWUEeIHo-8-qTDILfqMnocQWs9deWLm5j7MT4AeNxfStNr4uBfNEAxMmzl_32g0xfkelcTN2uSw7JBDQCWWKzQbSg) or contact us at 903-465-2720.

* City and departmental pages must meet the guidelines of posting, followers, engagement, etc. that are outlined in this document, as well as all applicable licensing agreements and community standards promulgated by the proprietary platform. To request a new channel, a request for approval must be completed to demonstrate a need for the channel consistent with organizational goals and business necessity. The requesting department shall also demonstrate their ability to manage the page content in order to keep it relevant in the long-term. The Community Engagement Director is responsible for approving new social media channels.
* All City social media pages will utilize the official city logo consistent with brand standards and logo guidelines, approved departmental logo or a Denison photograph relevant to the department and approved as an official marketing image consistent with the City Brand Standards and Logo Guidelines. The Community Engagement Director, or designee, is responsible for approving images and logos to be used on all City social media pages.

1. Department Directors shall assign a staff member(s) as an Editor for their social media sites. A backup Editor for each site must also be identified. Editors are responsible for monitoring sites and posting professionally written and appropriate content and information. Employees designated as Editors are also responsible for compliance with the licensing agreement and/or community standards promulgated by the social media platforms.
2. The Director of Community Engagement will have administrative privileges to all social media pages licensed by the City of Denison.
3. Employees or contractors that are not designated as Editors are prohibited from posting on behalf of the City or administering any social media sites established by the City. Content can be created by a contractor and files will be posted by city employees only.
4. Commenters on the City’s social media pages will be directed to the City’s website or other resources for additional information on public speech venues.
5. Editors participating in the administration of social media are responsible for monitoring the sites. Comments which address a complaint, or notify the city of a complaint needing attention, will be forwarded upon review to the appropriate department to determine whether a response or action is necessary. A response notifying the citizen that the comment or complaint has been received should be sent by the end of the day, excluding weekends and holidays. Editors should strive to respond to comments as soon as possible, but within 48 hours, and discuss the concern directly with the commenter.
6. All employees participating as editors and back-up editors will receive training on the content and application of this policy prior to being approved as a designated editor. The editors will be designated by the department director.
7. In addition to the Communications Committee, the Community Engagement department may monitor content on each of the sites to ensure adherence to this policy for appropriate use, message, and branding consistent with the message goals of the City and adherence to the City’s record retention policy. All external user generated posts, video and images will be reviewed to ensure appropriateness of content according to the User-Generated Post Statement, which will be included on all City-managed social media pages:

USER GENERATED POSTS

User-generated posts will be deleted, hidden, rejected or removed (if possible) when the content:

* Is off-subject or out of context
* contains obscenity or material appealing to the prurient interest
* contains personal identifying information or sensitive personal information
* contains offensive terms which target a protected class of individuals
* is threatening, harassing or discriminatory
* incites or promotes violence or illegal activities
* contains information that reasonably could compromise individual or public safety
* advertises or promotes a commercial product or service, or any entity or individual
* promotes or endorses political campaigns or candidates
* contains images or words which are not properly attributed to the owner or copyright holder or which are used without permission or in violation of the platform’s proprietary license and standards

# USAGE

1. Wherever possible, links will direct users back to the City's official website, [www.cityofdenison.com,](http://www.cityofdenison.com/) for more information, forms, documents or online services. Editors are encouraged to share, or reference information posted on other City of Denison social media sites.
2. Employees authorized to represent the City via social media sites must always conduct themselves as professional representatives of the City and meet customer service expectations. Employees shall be limited to discussing objective and factual information. While acting on behalf of the City Employees shall not:
   1. Participate in editorial conversation regarding political candidates, issues, or views.
   2. Send copies of documents, images, or video in violation of copyright, trademark, or any other intellectual property laws.
   3. Participate in conversation containing offensive, abusive, threatening, discriminatory or other similar kind of language inappropriate for the organization and/or inconsistent with City policies and procedures.
   4. Transmit confidential information. Confidential information under this policy is considered as:
      * Personal data of employees, site users or citizens.
      * Records related to internal policies and practices which if disclosed may prejudice the effective performance of the operations of the City or the safety of employees or others.
      * Non-public financial information, information regarding the purchase or sale of real estate or pending personnel matters
      * Information prepared in anticipation of or connection with litigation and adjudicative proceedings.
      * Communications protected by an attorney-client privilege or any other privilege established by law.
      * Draft documents or communications
      * Information not subject to disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act
   5. Delete, edit, hide or remove a post or comment or block a user unless authorized to do so by the employee’s Department Director or the Community Engagement Department.
3. Information posted by Editors must be factual, grammatically correct, professionally written, and cannot impair the public’s confidence in the operation of City government or the performance of the individual employee.
4. Employees may participate on the City’s social media sites as users, but may not violate the Internet, Social Media and E-Mail Use Policy contained in the Employee Handbook. Employees who choose to participate on the City’s social media sites as users should be clear to act in the employee’s individual capacity and not as a representative of the City.
5. To ensure transparency, all media streams shall be set up to be publicly viewable according to guidelines in this document. All authorized City accounts may be subject to the Public Information Act and the City’s record retention policy. Account managers are encouraged to become familiar with the City’s requirements and obligations.
6. Employees who observe or become aware of comments, statements or information posted or shared through a City page which is in violation of this policy should report the matter to the Employee’s supervisor and/or the Community Engagement Department.

# USER ENGAGEMENT GUIDELINES

In a visible and accessible location, City administered pages should include the following guidelines:

# User Generated Posts

(referenced above)

# Reporting Emergencies

The City’s social media sites should not be used to report an emergency of any kind and is not continuously monitored. In case of an emergency, dial 911.

# Open Records and Records Retention

Content posted or shared via a Social media sites or an individual page if affiliated with the City of Denison may be subject to disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act and may also be subject to the City’s records retention policy. For additional information about the City of Denison, please visit our website at [www.cityofdenison.com](http://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.cityofdenison.com%2F&amp;h=AT2v0T7LrdJKDi7qwf_8WmyhMVco6m0GmfQbQBGC77cFEOJonDEhwU7vrq8xIw3C8g3ze5yxSr4MuelAsF6paweVPH36WyT6ywaSQ81NlhI1jIXE4yJvqWCinyBurbPLyA) or contact us at 903-465-2720.

# UNAFFILIATED SITES AND PAGES

1. Only the City Manager’s Office or Community Engagement is authorized to respond to information about the City that is posted on sites or pages not maintained by the City. When responding to posted material the authorized responder must identify themselves as being a City representative. Content of the response shall not impair the public’s confidence in the operation of City government or the performance of any individual employee.
2. Employees who become aware of incorrect, inflammatory, or potentially damaging information about the City that is posted to publicly accessible sites shall notify their department director and the Community Engagement department.

# EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

During events of high community interest, including any event requiring Emergency Operations Center activation, the Community Engagement department shall assume authority to publish information through social media sites to insure the consistency, relevance, and timeliness of the City’s message across all communication sites working directly with Emergency Management. Unless otherwise instructed, severe weather warnings and watches should be published by Emergency Management. City of Denison social media sites will share this information on their accounts.

For a major emergency, the City of Denison should follow these guidelines:

1. Facebook posts should start with: “UPDATE, (date: 5/14/14), (time: 1:45 pm)
2. We do this because if we are posting multiple times during an emergency, Facebook will jumble the posts on a user’s newsfeed so that the most recent post may not be the highest post on a user’s newsfeed.
3. Include links to emergency departments (City of Denison Emergency Management, Public Safety Communications, Grayson County Office of Emergency Management, National Weather Service, Oncor, etc.).
4. Remind followers that during an emergency, the City of Denison will not be able to respond to all comments and questions.

An example post might say “We are responding to the current in Denison. Listen to all instructions from public safety personnel. City’s Emergency Operations Center has been activated and we are responding with all needed resources. We will not be able to respond to all comments and questions here. Tune into local news coverage for weather updates and warnings

1. When a disaster strikes a neighboring city, advise followers to sign up for the emergency notification system.

An example post might say “We're actively monitoring the fire in Pottsboro ("HWY 120 Fire"). Denison is not currently affected. Times like these are a great reminder to be sure you've signed up for City Call and taken other steps to get prepared for wildfires and other emergencies. Click on the link for more tips. Be safe!”

1. Post pictures of key personnel during the event in order to build goodwill and professional confidence in the City of Denison. For example, post a picture of the Fire Chief talking with media with a caption saying “Chief doing a great job keeping everyone informed #denisontornado” Photographs and associated posts should be made consistently with the confidentiality requirements expressed in this policy.