

## **City of Stanton Social Media Policies**

City agencies share information, images, and video with the public through external social media websites. Users are welcome to submit or post content, including photographs and videos, to an official city site where the agency allows users to post content. The content shall pertain to the subject of the social media site and not violate the comment policy articulated below. Users may only post their own, original content. Reproduced or borrowed content that reasonably appears to violate third party rights will be hidden. Users should have no expectation of privacy when posting to a City site.

Comments made by the public to these sites are reviewed and, while comments will not be edited by City of Stanton personnel, a comment may be deleted if it violates the comment policy described here.

- Malicious or harmful software.
- Comments posted by automatic software programs (ie. bots).
- Advertisements, promotions, or solicitations of a commercial product or service.
- Confidential, sensitive, or private information.
- Obscene, indecent or profane language, pictures and/or videos.
- Threats of violence or to public safety.
- Copyrighted or trademarked materials in violation of state or federal law.
- Comments not related to the posted topic for the City of Stanton social media page or post.
- Disruptively repetitive content.
- Violate any local, state, or federal laws and/or is otherwise unlawful.

Social media accounts for any City of Stanton agency or department may not be established without prior approval. Questions or concerns regarding the City of Stanton's social media activity or this Customer Use Policy should be submitted to [info@stantonky.gov](mailto:info@stantonky.gov). For more information, refer to the City of Stanton's Social Media Policy and the City of Stanton's Customer Use Policy.

# City of Stanton Social Media Policy

## **I. Purpose**

To be transparent, informative and convenient to visitors and residents, the City of Stanton (“the City”) communicates with the public through several social media channels. This type of communication is immediate, two-way, and can have a significant effect on public perception and actions. This social media policy establishes a process for establishing and maintaining social media accounts to protect the City divisions and personnel.

## **II. Applicability**

This policy applies to all City departments, divisions, programs, employees, contractors, consultants, temporaries, interns, volunteers, and other workers within local government that use City social media accounts to promote the City or its departments, divisions, or programs. This policy applies to the use of social media in the course of conducting official City business and does not address employees' personal use of social media outside the workplace. While City elected officials and boards are not included in the City’s Social Media Policy, they are encouraged to follow this policy in an effort to protect City branding and provide for a unity of message and to adhere to the law regarding government use of social media.

## **III. Definitions**

- A. **Social Media** - Media designed to be disseminated through social interaction and consisting of user-generated content using highly accessible and scalable publishing technologies including, but not limited to Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, blogs, wikis, photo-sharing networks, online communities, podcasts, user-generated videos, message boards, -RSS feeds, and similar technologies.
- B. **City Social Media Representative** - City employee or official who has been afforded username and password access to a City social media site and who contributes content in the name of or on behalf of the City and/or any City department, division, official, or employee. Temporary employees, interns, and volunteers cannot be City Social Media Representatives, and thus cannot be afforded username and password access to a City social media site, while contractors and consultants may if so provided in the contractor's or consultant's scope of work. All City Social Media Representatives must follow the guidelines within this policy.

## **IV. Policy**

### **A. Approval of Social Media Accounts**

1. City departments or division that wish to create a new social media account or maintain an existing one shall complete the Social Media Account Request Form. This request form must be submitted to the City Clerk for approval. This form requires prospective Social Media Representatives to identify the purpose, audience, and goals for the account. Whether existing platforms or sites could be utilized or merged should be considered prior to completing the Social Media Account Request Form to establish a new account.
2. Requests for a social media account must be approved by the department head and the Mayor. Copies of the final written approval shall be retained by the City Clerk.
3. No person subject to this policy shall create a City social media account without following the provisions herein. Existing social media sites shall be identified, reviewed, and amended if necessary to come into compliance with this policy.

### **B. Administration of Social Media Accounts**

1. Approved Social Media Representatives shall complete the Social Media Account User Authorization Form or the Social Media Agency/Contractor Account User Authorization Form. This form must be submitted to the Mayor's office for approval.
2. The Social Media Account User Authorization Form must be approved by the department head and the Mayor. Copies of the final written approval shall be retained by the City Clerk.
3. Links to approved accounts shall be posted on the City's website.
4. City Social Media Representatives shall not share login information or passwords. Division directors and/or commissioners shall immediately notify the City Clerk of any changes to the Social Media Account Request or Social Media Account User Authorization forms. This process ensures that the credentials for accessing social media accounts are available in the event of an emergency, employee termination or retirement, etc.
5. Department heads and the City Clerk shall monitor content on the City's social media accounts to ensure adherence to the guidelines herein.
6. Content not consistent with this policy shall be removed immediately. The City Clerk or Deputy City Clerk may disable a City social media account or remove a Social Media Representative from the account at any time and for any reason, including, but not limited to:
  - Any violation of this policy or the law
  - Unprofessional use of the account
  - Lack of use or disinterest by the public

- Failure to meet the purpose and goals approved in the Social Media Account Request Form
- Security breach

### C. Best Practices

1. **Terms of Service:** Terms of Service (TOS) clauses vary across social media platforms; as such, departments, divisions, and programs should carefully read the TOS of each social media tool before establishing an account.
2. **Branding:** City social media accounts shall be clearly branded as an official government presence and shall link back to the [www.stantonky.gov](http://www.stantonky.gov) website. It is important to represent the City with a consistent message across all forms of communication, including websites, social media, and printed materials.
3. **Disclaimers:** All City social media accounts shall link to the City of Stanton Customer Use Policy when possible.
4. **Content/Frequency:** Social media accounts are not static sites; Social Media Representatives are encouraged to post content at least twice a week. Content must relate to the mission, activities and policies of the relevant City department, division, or program, as outlined in the approved Social Media Account Request Form. Social Media Representatives shall obtain proper license or permission to post copyrighted material, such as photographs and videos that are not created by or owned by the City. Content should be timely, engaging, accurate, free of grammatical and spelling errors, professional, inclusive, and up-to-date. Before posting, consider potential reactions to the content. When in doubt about posting an item, Social Media Representatives should consult with a department head and/or the City Attorney.
5. **Prohibited Content:** Social Media Representatives shall not post on any City social media account:
  - Nonpublic information of any kind
  - Personal, sensitive or confidential information of any kind
  - Information that could compromise public safety or an ongoing investigation
  - Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identification, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability
  - Obscene, indecent, or profane language

- Threats, personal attacks or defamatory statements
- Fraudulent, deceptive or misleading information
- Promotion or endorsement of services and products
- Comments advocating illegal activity or posting of material that violates copyrights or trademarks of others
- Content that violates any local, state or federal laws and/or is otherwise unlawful
- Any campaign materials
- Items regarding litigation or pending litigation

6. **Moderating Citizen Input:** Social media accounts encourage the exchange of ideas and information, allowing users to ask questions and voice their opinions. Some of those comments may be negative or unsavory. Social Media Representatives should be mindful that such comments are no less deserving of First Amendment protection than comments of praise when determining whether to allow comments on a social media page.

Social Media Representatives should check their accounts daily for feedback and, if necessary, respond as quickly (within 24 hours) as possible. However, it should be made clear to the public that the City does not guarantee a response to any comments or messages sent on social media accounts. The public should be encouraged to communicate comments or messages to which they desire a response through traditional means like email by including a sentence such as the following in a prominent place: "The City of Stanton does not guarantee a response to comments or messages sent on social media accounts. If a response is desired to a comment but the City has not responded, please submit the comment via email, mail or telephone call."

7. **Removing Comments:** City social media accounts are designated (limited) public forums, and thus the City may adopt reasonable content-neutral regulations on public comments in these fora. A Social Media Representative may only remove comments that violate the City of Stanton Customer Use Policy. No comment may be removed due to disagreement with the viewpoint expressed.

Before removing a comment, the Social Media Representative must document the post with a screen capture and contact the Mayor's office and the City Attorney. No comment shall be removed unless the comment violates this policy, the City Social Media Customer Use Policy, or other applicable law. Comments containing spam, malicious software or scams may be immediately removed by the department head or the City Clerk.

8. **Other Policies:** Use of a City social media account shall comply with other City regulations, policies and procedures, including but not limited to:
  - Employee Policy and Procedures
  - Email Policy
  
9. **Open Records and Retention Requirements:** City social media accounts are subject to the Kentucky Open Records Act. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to City business, including a list of subscribers and posted communications, is a public record. Wherever possible, such sites shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure under the Kentucky Open Records Act. Social Media Representatives should consult the City's Record Retention Schedule to determine how long particular social media posts should be retained.

## **V. Forms**

The following forms are maintained and updated by the City Clerk:

- Social Media Account Request Form
- Social Media Account User Authorization Form
- Social Media Agency/Contractor Account User Authorization Form

\*Forms attached to this policy are current to the latest revision of the policy. The most up-to-date forms can be found on the intranet or in the office responsible for the form.

# City of Stanton

## Social Media Account Request Form

Departments, divisions and programs of the City of Stanton that wish to create and/or maintain an official City social media site must complete a copy of this form and submit it to the City Clerk **prior** to activating any social media account. All social media account administrators and users must adhere to the City of Stanton Social Media Policy.

Employee Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department/Division/Program account is requested for: \_\_\_\_\_

What social media platform(s) are you requesting accounts for?

Facebook  X/Twitter  Instagram  YouTube  Other \_\_\_\_\_

*\*If approved, the City Clerk will set up the account(s) and maintain access/password in case of emergency or staff changes.*

Submit the following information on a separate sheet(s): What is the intended purpose of the social media account? Is there an already existing account that you could use to share your message? Why or why not? Be specific. Who is your target audience? What are your goals for growing the number of account followers? How often will you post? Be specific.

Social media accounts require a significant time commitment and are challenging to grow and maintain. Submit a three-month tentative schedule of posts, including visuals.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Head

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Return the form to the City Clerk for approval.*

Recommend: yes  no  Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Approved: yes  no  \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*The City Clerk will retain a copy of this form.*

# City of Stanton

## Social Media Agency / Contractor Account

### User Authorization Form

---

Departments of the City of Stanton who wish to have an agency, contractor or consultant access to an official Stanton social media account must complete a copy of this authorization form and submit it to the City Clerk **prior** to giving access to any account. All social media users must adhere to Social Media Policy.

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration date\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Requesting access to all social media accounts under the heading: \_\_\_\_\_

City of Stanton employee that manages this account and will be working with user: \_\_\_\_\_

\*List contract end date or expected end date. Access beyond the listed date will need to be reauthorized. Not to be longer than a year unless a multi-year contract is in place.

\*\*Agency or contractor must join City of Stanton Meta Business Manager to have access to Facebook/Instagram accounts.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Head

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Recommend: yes  no  Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Approved: yes  no  \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*The City Clerk will retain a copy of this form.*



# City of Stanton

## Social Media Account User Authorization Form

---

Employees of the City of Stanton who wish to have access to an official City social media account must complete a copy of this authorization form and submit it to the City Clerk *prior* to accessing any social media account. All social media users must adhere to the City of Stanton Social Media Policy.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Employee number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Requesting access to all social media accounts under the heading:

\_\_\_\_\_

\*User must join the City's Meta Business Manager to access Facebook or Instagram accounts.

I agree to regularly communicate to my audience at least two times a week and understand that my account may be disabled if I do not comply.

Employee signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Department head

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

Return the form to the City Clerk for approval.

\_\_\_\_\_

Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

Recommend: yes  no  Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Approved: yes  no  \_\_\_\_\_

City Clerk

Date

*The City Clerk will retain a copy of this form.*