

# Social Media Use Guidelines

**Effective Date:** August 1, 2020

**Purpose:** To provide clarity and guidance regarding the use of social media.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all Town of Gilbert employees.

**Procedures:**

## 1. SOCIAL MEDIA, SOCIAL NETWORKING, AND TOWN WEBSITE

Employees are permitted to use social media, social networking or the Gilbert website either through the use of Gilbert or personal electronic devices while at work. This applies to all content posted or sent by employees and to personal content posted or sent from Gilbert or personal electronic devices.

### FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS

Gilbert employees have rights of freedom of speech, religion, and assembly under the First Amendment. Employees shall not disclose through social media or social networking confidential information of Gilbert or other sensitive information obtained as part of their job duties. If an employee believes that information is a matter of public concern, the procedures set forth in Section 1.5 of the Personnel Rules shall be followed.

Employees may express themselves as private citizens on social media sites. Nothing contained in this Administrative Guideline shall be construed as denying an employee their civil or political liberties as guaranteed by the United States and Arizona Constitutions.

Employees are cautioned that speech on or off duty, made pursuant to their official duties—that is, that owes its existence to the employee's professional duties and responsibilities—may not necessarily be protected speech under the First Amendment and may form the basis for discipline if deemed detrimental to the Town of Gilbert or the department they represent. Employees are also cautioned that their speech and related activity on social media sites may, in some instances, be considered a reflection upon their position, and the Town.

All communications with the media shall be pursuant to the Media Relations Procedure.

## 2. ADMINISTRATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL NETWORKING

- a. The Office of Digital Government, in the Town's Manager's Office, and/or the Mayor shall be Gilbert's official spokesperson for Gilbert's social media and social networking and in that capacity shall maintain Gilbert's official web presence.
- b. The creation of all new Town of Gilbert social media accounts must be coordinated through the Office of Digital Government.
- c. All social media administrators must follow the Social Media Comment Policy which can be found online at [www.gilbertaz.gov/connect](http://www.gilbertaz.gov/connect).
- d. The Information Technology Department shall administer security and monitoring

measures for Gilbert's social media and social networking.

- e. Department directors, managers, supervisors, and employees shall be responsible for assuring compliance with the provisions of this section.

### **3. NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY**

Gilbert reserves the right to use software and other available tools to monitor verbal and written communication, or discussions about Gilbert or its employees anywhere on the Internet, including blogs, other public social networking sites, and open communications.

### **4. PUBLIC RECORDS**

Any employee who manages the use of social media is responsible for preserving public records and maintaining them in accordance with A.R.S. § 39-101 et al. and Gilbert procedures.

### **5. USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES**

- a. Personal social media activity must not interfere with work duties or Town operations.
- b. Employees are encouraged to use social media as private citizens or for personal matters, so long as their use does not impair working relationships with the Town of Gilbert for which loyalty and confidentiality are important, impede the performance of duties, impair discipline and harmony among coworkers, negatively affect the public perception of the organization or department, or violate any provisions of the Personnel Rules.
- c. Employees should not use their Town of Gilbert email addresses for communication on their personal social networking sites, unless necessary to manage an official Town of Gilbert social media account (Example: Official social media account administrators).
- d. Employees shall not attribute personal statements, opinions, or beliefs to Gilbert when engaging in blogging or social networking. Employees assume all risks relating to the use of social media and social networking.
- e. Employees are prohibited from disclosing confidential information or information that could breach the security of the Gilbert's computer network.
- f. All requests for using third party websites and services to advertise Gilbert business, events, or services shall first be submitted to the Chief Digital Officer for review and approval in consultation with the Town Manager. All Gilbert-related content posted on third party websites shall comply with Gilbert web standards. Video may only be posted on outside sources (such as YouTube) by or with the consent of the Office of Digital Government.
- g. Any employee using the Town's network for personal use does so at the employee's own risk. Use of the Town's network for personal purposes to the extent that such use compromises security or impedes Town business in any manner, including a decrease in employee productivity, may subject the employee to disciplinary measures up to and including termination.
- h. Employees have no expectation of privacy for any personal communications or information sent or received via the Town's network or Town's devices.

### **6. TOWN OF GILBERT WEBSITE**

The Gilbert website is managed through the Office of Digital Government with designated and trained content managers located in each department. All content posted to the Gilbert website shall follow Gilbert's brand standards and not include content that is harassing, discriminatory, defamatory, promotes hate, obscene, profane, pornographic, or is in violation of federal, state, or local laws.

If a new content manager is needed, contact the Office of Digital Government.