

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES

Subject: Social Media Use

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Authorized Approval: Kross/Coffman

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Purpose

To give direction to Town of Queen Creek employees, volunteers and other affiliated organizations who use Town electronic and computer resources to access social media sites and engage in social networking. To develop a certified QC Employee Social Media Ambassador program to ensure proper use of Social Media and to help amplify Town messages and receive more content to share from employees.

Definitions

Social media includes various forms of discussion and information sharing including social networks, blogs, video sharing, podcasts, wikis, message boards, and online forums. Technologies include photo-sharing, wall-postings, e-mail, instant messaging, and music sharing for example. Examples of social media applications include, but are not limited to Google and Yahoo groups (reference, social networking), Wikipedia (reference), Facebook (social networking), YouTube (social networking and video sharing), Twitter (social networking and microblogging), LinkedIn (business networking), Instagram (social networking and image sharing), Snapchat (social networking) and news media comment sharing/blogging.

Social networking is the practice of expanding the number of business and/or social contacts by making connections through web-based applications.

Guidelines

Any conduct on social media sites that violates this Policy may be cause for disciplinary action and/or the restriction of the use of Town Social Media by the offending party.

Employees are accountable for any actions which cause them to violate this policy. Any violations of this policy may result in progressive discipline pursuant to Town policies and administrative guidelines.

NOTE: If actions performed by Town staff have an immediate and adverse impact on the health and performance of the Town's computer network or broadband connectivity, the Information Technology Division (IT) may turn off network access at the port level, disabling data and voices services as a result. In response to such activities, IT, in conjunction with the appropriate division/department supervisor, reserves the right to pursue the progressive discipline process.

A. Responsibilities

1. It is the responsibility of the Communications & Marketing Division to act as the Town's official spokesperson and social media administrator and maintain the Town's presence on social media sites. Consistent with this Policy, employees may participate on the Town's sites as individual users, but may not make announcements regarding Town events and actions. Employees may answer questions or share information about the Town from their personal social media accounts only if they are certified as a QC Employee Social Media Ambassador.
2. It is the responsibility of the Information Technology Division to administer security and monitor users on Town equipment.
3. It is the responsibility of all Communication Resource Team members who would like public information to be displayed on social media sites to coordinate with the Communication & Marketing Division.
4. The responsibility for assuring complete compliance with the provisions of this Policy rests with the department director, supervisors and individual employee involved. It is the responsibility of social media users to remain informed about Town policies related to this type of activity.
5. It is the responsibility of each supervisor and manager to implement the appropriate disciplinary action for those employees who violate the Social Media Use Policy.
6. The Information and Marketing Services Department provides a two-part social media training to staff as QC Employee Social Media Ambassadors. "Social Media 101" will give a basic overview of social media sites. "Social Media 102" will provide more in-depth training in social media best practices.
7. Employees should be conservative in personal use of social media sites that pertain to the Town and understand that public records laws may bring their use under scrutiny by the media and public.
8. Employees may not conduct official Town business on social media sites or represent themselves as doing so, unless they are a certified QC Employee Social Media Ambassador. Employees assume all responsibility with social networking sites.
9. Those who have successfully completed training and are designated QC Employee Social Media Ambassadors may post information relating to their work with the Town on their personal social media sites. This includes sharing event information, answering questions relating to the Town on group pages, and sharing general information pertaining to their work.
10. QC Employee Social Media Ambassadors may share, tag or send messages of images and video on the job to the Town's official pages. These may be used on Town social media sites.

B. Inappropriate Use – Town Social Media

1. Any activity involving the Town network which knowingly contradicts the mission, vision and goals of the Town is inappropriate. Activities that violate local, state, or federal laws or use policies of social networking sites are also prohibited. Actions that violate the public trust or hamper the ability of Information and Marketing Services staff to provide administrative or network support are not allowed.
2. Employees are prohibited from disclosing Town confidential information or information that could breach the security of the Town's computer network. Employees may not use Town logos or trademarks in their personal use of social media.
3. Violation of any other Town or Information and Marketing Services policy, such as the Internet Use, E-mail Usage, and Appropriate Use of Computer Network Resources guidelines, will result in disciplinary action. See Policy 760.
4. Employees should not post messages of political support for Town candidates and use caution before liking a Town's candidate's Facebook page to the extent it could be construed as soliciting or attempting to solicit support for a candidate. Employees are allowed to be "friends" with Town candidates on social media and be in a group candidates are in.
5. Never post Content on Social Media that attacks, abuses, or harasses, violates the privacy of, is hurtful, offensive or damaging toward, or defames any current or former employee or independent contractor of the Town.

C. Additional Inappropriate Use of Personal Social Media for Non-Certified QC Employee Social Media Ambassadors

If you are not a QC Employee Social Media Ambassador, to the extent you choose to identify the Town as your employer in your personal, individual profiles and/or content on Social Media sites, you must be extra cautious (1) that you do not give the appearance that any content you post is being posted on behalf of, or with the approval of, the Town; (2) that you do not post anything inappropriate (including ethnic slurs, personal insults, and obscenities) or unlawful that may reflect badly on the Town; and (3) that you post respectfully on topics that could cause hurt feelings. The Town reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to require any particular employee, group of employees, or all employees to remove the identification of the Town as their employer from their personal, individual profiles and/or content.

Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, do not post content that disparages the Town or damages its reputation.

If necessary to avoid the appearance that you are speaking on behalf of the Town. To the extent that you reference the Town, you should include a clear and unambiguous disclaimer that the viewpoints you are expressing are yours as an individual, and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Town.

D. Queen Creek Employee Social Media Ambassador Program

1. Social Media 101 includes the basics of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.
2. Social Media 201 includes how to take good photos, what information to share on each channel, how to tag the Town in their posts and what is to be expected of them as ambassadors, including submitting records of social media posts.
3. Additional trainings will be provided as necessary.
4. Goals of QC Employee Social Media Ambassador Program:
 - a. Mitigate risk – a better-trained staff prevents unintended bad choices. Training will protect the organization.
 - b. Get more content – QC Employee Social Media Ambassadors will be able to uniquely share content with the Town’s Digital Media Specialist. This will increase efficiency and sell employee culture.
 - c. Amplify message – More people sharing information creates a greater reach.
 - d. To ensure proper steps are being taken to preserve public records.
5. Those who successfully complete the program will become certified Social Media Ambassadors.
6. The Town reserves the right to revoke the Social Media Ambassador certification of an employee if the employee violates the Social Media Policy or other cause exist in the Town’s sole discretion.
7. If a certified employee leaves the Town, they will no longer be able to speak on the Town’s behalf.

D. Archives and Retention

1. Communications received through Town social media or from or to employees while conducting Town social media communications are considered public record and should be considered as correspondence.
2. Any correspondence or posts on Town social media pages should be archived for the purposes of Arizona retention laws.
3. Content submitted on Town of Queen Creek social media pages that is deemed inappropriate should be retained. A description of why the content was removed should also be retained.

E. Comments

1. Comments from the public are welcome on social media sites. Town staff will monitor comments daily. The Town has the right to remove the following types of comments in its sole discretion:
 - a. Vulgar language
 - b. Personal attacks of any kind
 - c. Comments or content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, genetics, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation or sexual identity.
 - d. Spam or unrelated links to other sites
 - e. Comments that advocate illegal activity
 - f. Comments that infringe on copyrights or trademark
 - g. Comments that provide personally identifiable medical or financial information
 - h. Information that may compromise the safety, security or proceedings of public systems, any criminal or civil investigations, or any member of staff.
 - i. Repeat violators may be banned from participation on Town social media platforms.
2. All comments on Town's page should be retained and archived.