



City of Oxford Social Media Terms and Conditions for Users

PURPOSE. Because many of our citizens and other stakeholders utilize social media for news and communications, the City of Oxford (“City”) has developed its own social media accounts, which help us inform the public about our work and mission.

The City has an important interest in assuring the accuracy and consistency of information associated with our social media sites. We also respect the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and the constitutional right to freedom of speech. These terms and conditions establish guidelines for the public’s use of social media. This policy is not intended to address any particular form of social media, rather social media in general, as advances in technology will occur, and new tools will emerge.

The City of Oxford is participating in social media formats to reach a broader audience, disseminate information and interact with residents and other stakeholders.

DEFINITIONS

1. “Social media” means digital content created by the City and communicated on platforms that allow sharing, commenting, and engagement from the public. Examples of social media accounts we may use are Facebook, X formerly known as Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn.
2. “Comments” include any digital content, information, links, images, videos, or any other form of communicative content posted in reply or response to a social media account operated by us.
3. “User” means a member of the public who views or interacts with one or more of our social media accounts.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. These terms and conditions apply to all of the City's social media sites. Where possible, a link to these terms and conditions will be made available as a hyperlink or posted as text somewhere on our social media account(s).
2. Users should know that social media posts we make, comments and replies to those posts, and any direct or private messages sent to us may be public records subject to applicable public records release.
3. Our social media accounts are not monitored 24/7 and no one should utilize our social media accounts to seek emergency services. Anyone in need of emergency help should call 9-1-1.
4. City of Oxford social media sites will not constitute an official form of communication for legal notice, specific requests for service, public records requests, registering a complaint, filing a claim, or to report criminal activity.
5. Members of the media are asked to send questions to the City of Oxford City Manager's Office through their normal channels and refrain from submitting questions on social media as comments. Reporter questions will not be posted or answered

EXPECTATIONS

1. Honest, civil, and productive discussions provide the best environment for citizens to understand the work of their government and participate in constructive engagement.
2. We ask users to consider that our social media feeds may be viewed by children and other impressionable people. Please avoid profanity, personal attacks, bullying, or use of incorrect information.

CONTENT MODERATION

1. **Limited Public Forum.** We invite members of the public to view and, where possible, provide comments or other engagement on our social media accounts. However, the law permits us to hide and/or delete comments that are not protected speech under the First Amendment and relevant caselaw.
2. **Prohibited Content.** The following will be hidden or deleted:
 - a. Comments directly advocating or encouraging violence or illegal activity; threats to any person or organization.
 - b. Comments that directly promote, foster, perpetuate, or advocate discrimination based on race, age, religion, gender, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status, status in regard to public assistance, or any other legally protected class.
 - c. Comments containing obscenity, which is defined as sexually explicit or pornographic content that is patently offensive, appeals to prurient interest, and lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value (see *Miller v. California*, 413 U.S. 15 (1973)); comments containing hate speech, racism, slander, vulgarity, and threats of violence.
 - d. Comments containing links to malware and/or malicious content that affects the normal functioning of a computer system, server, or browser; comments that contain a hyperlink to any website other than those controlled by the City. This will be done without regard to the viewpoint of the comment containing such a link or the content of the site to which the link redirects.
 - e. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
 - f. Comments not topically related to the subject being discussed or post being commented on.

- g. Duplicate comments posted repeatedly within a short period of time by either single or multiple users.
- h. Comments violating a citizen's privacy or comments containing actual defamation against a person, including public officials, either as determined by a court or comments that are patently defamatory by easily discovered facts.
- i. Comments that contain images or other content that violate the intellectual property or copyright rights of someone else, if the owner of that property notifies us that the property was posted in a comment on our social media account(s).
- j. Solicitations of commerce and other commercial speech promoting commercial products, entities or causes.
- k. Comments that endorse or oppose any political candidate or ballot proposition.

3. References, Links, and Embedded Content.

- a. Any references or links to a specific entity, product, service or organization posted by individuals on the City of Oxford's social media sites should not be considered an endorsement by the City of Oxford or its departments or employees.
- b. The City of Oxford does not review, sponsor, or endorse any other websites linked to this website. The views and opinions of authors, expressed on those websites do not necessarily state or reflect the opinion of the City of Oxford and may not be quoted or reproduced for the purpose of stating or implying any endorsement or approval of any product, person, or service.
- c. The City of Oxford is not responsible for the content that appears on these external links.

d. The City of Oxford is not responsible for and does not guarantee the authenticity, accuracy, appropriateness, nor security of the link, external website or its content, unless the link goes directly to a City of Oxford-managed website.

e. The City of Oxford reserves the right to delete links posted by individuals that violate the City's social media policy.

4. **Retention:** Posts, comments, and messages from social media platforms by the City, are transitory records. There is no obligation for the City to retain these records and they may be deleted when no longer considered to be of administrative value.

5. **Right of Appeal.** If our staff hides or deletes a user's comment pursuant to these terms and conditions, the user has the right to appeal that decision by sending an email or letter to the City within five business days. This correspondence will provide the user with an explanation for the action taken

Upon receipt of an appeal, our attorney will determine whether the comment at issue contained content protected by the First Amendment. If the appeal is successful, the comment may (if possible) be restored for public view, or the user may be permitted to repost the comment. Upon a determination that the comment was not protected by the First Amendment, the user will be notified that the appeal was denied.

6. **Blocking or Banning a User.** When we determine that a user has violated these terms and conditions on three or more occasions within a twelve-month rolling period, we may block or ban the offending user from the social media account where the violations occurred.

If we block or ban a user, we will (a) reasonably attempt to notify the user; (b) describe the violation(s); and (c) explain the appeal process.

If the appeal is successful and the user has not violated this policy three times within a rolling 12-month period, we will unblock or unban the

user from the social media account. If the appeal is not successful, our decision will stand.

COPYRIGHT POLICY

1. The City of Oxford retains copyright on all text, graphics, and other content produced by the City of Oxford and found on the social media site.
2. Any use of the City of Oxford seal or logo is prohibited without the express written permission of the City of Oxford.
3. Third Party Copyright: Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party or copyright should not be posted or submitted in any form without permission of the rights holder. Any person redistributing information subject to a third party copyright via the City's social media sites must adhere to the terms and conditions of the third party copyright holder.

DISCLAIMERS

1. The City of Oxford does not guarantee that any information posted by members of the public, or employees who are not designated as content providers is correct and it assumes no liability for any inaccuracies, loss, or damage resulting from reliance on any such information posted on this website by any unauthorized person(s).
2. The City of Oxford does not guarantee that the social media sites will be uninterrupted, permanent or error-free.
3. The City reserves the right to modify this policy at any time.