

# **Social Media Policy**

## Harvey County

### **Purpose**

Harvey County social media outlets and content are designed to promote, inform, educate and interact with residents, visitors and staff. While social media requires meticulous consideration to its responsibilities and potential risks, it should foster creativity and encouragement for content producers – social media allows opportunities for government transparency and feedback with the public, as well as solutions-based collaboration between departmental staff. The following guidelines establish social media parameters for Harvey County.

Violation of this policy is subject to potential disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

As social media evolves, the County reserves the right to amend its policy.

### **Definitions**

County: Harvey County, to include its employees, departments, offices and business operations, and those acting on behalf of the organization.

Social media: Digital information content sharing services, such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, LinkedIn, YouTube, live streams, podcasts, message boards and online forums, and blogging/vlogging outlets, as well as future social mediums not yet developed.

External usage: Social media content created for use apart from the County's operations, e.g. personal social mediums.

Internal usage: Social media content created, curated and controlled for the purpose of representing the County.

Comments: Interactions, information, photographs, videos, website links presented on social mediums, to also include likes, retweets, favorites, shares and similar online actions.

Endorsement: Communication that promotes products, services, or businesses, or political candidates, organizations, or parties.

## **Comments and interactions**

The County reserves the right to regulate, remove and/or report public and/or employee comments on County social media that are deemed:

1. Profane, abusive, or obscene content
2. Derogatory or discriminatory content on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or national origin
3. Defamation or personal attacks
4. Threats toward an individual, group, organization, business, or nation
5. Undue solicitation of goods, services, or commerce
6. In violation of local, state, or federal law
7. To be an infringement of copyright
8. Irrelevant to the information presented

Violation of the County's commenting and interaction policy may result in the denial of access to County social media pages and accounts.

Upon the decision to remove a comment or interaction from a County social media account, the supervisor, department head or public information officer will document the action by screenshotting the comment and saving documentation, which shall include time, date and a briefing on why the comment was removed.

Public comments on County social media platforms determined permissible for publication shall not be considered an agreement or endorsement from the County, and are solely the views and opinions of the commenting individual or party.

## **Management**

The following addresses the management and conduct expected of County employees on social media.

### *1. Internal usage*

- A. Internal usage of Harvey County social media shall be limited to those who have read, signed and acknowledged the County's personnel manual, those

- approved by the county administrator, and/or those explicitly granted access by department heads.
- B. Social media login credentials shall not be otherwise shared beyond those approved. All login emails must be linked back to a Harvey County organization email address.
  - C. All County social media shall be co-administered by the public information officer of Harvey County.
  - D. County social media pages and accounts, both present and future, should provide clarity as to their purpose and that the accounts are maintained by County staff, and when possible, link to the County's website and/or corresponding office web pages.
  - E. The creation of social media pages and accounts in the County's name must be approved by the county administrator.
  - F. Approved employees are encouraged to promote interaction and discussion on County social media. Careful consideration and discussion with supervisors should be undertaken for matters that may be considered controversial or seen as endorsements. If you are unsure if the internal usage would meet County standards, please consult a supervisor or the public information officer for guidance.
  - G. An employee posting sensitive, proprietary or confidential information on social media is strictly forbidden.
  - H. County employees should have no expectation of privacy when utilizing County equipment for social media. All County policies, rules, regulations, and standards of conduct apply.
  - I. County social media is subject to the Kansas Open Records Act, and content within may be a public record subject to disclosure.

## *2. External usage*

- A. External usage of County employees' accounts does not generally follow the internal usage standards.
- B. However, employees should be mindful that their individual views expressed through external communication may be mistaken as representative of the views of the County. While a disclaimer giving notice that the views and opinions of the individual employee are being stated as a private citizen can alleviate misrepresentation of the County, disciplinary action will still be considered if the communication violates County policy.
- C. Employees shall not use a County email address to register or sign up for personal social media accounts.

- D. This policy is not intended to infringe upon or restrict the rights of County employees under the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States.
- E. The above is to also include media usage policies and best practices stated and set forth in the Harvey County Personnel Manual.

Employee's printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_