



City of Saratoga Springs Employee Handbook
Title: Web and Social Media Sites Policy
Date of Origin: July 19, 2011; Revised March 20, 2012; Updated August 7, 2012; Updated June 18, 2013
Responsible Party: Finance Department
Date of Review: Annual

Title: Web and Social Media Site Policy

Purpose and Goal

The purpose of the City of Saratoga Springs' (City) web and social media sites is to provide information to citizens, businesses and visitors about the City's government services, programs, projects, issues, events, public meeting documents, and activities by providing accurate, non-editorial content that will inform, educate and enlighten users. In maintaining its official web and social media sites, the City does not intend in any manner to create a forum or other means by which public discourse, exchange of opinions or discussion on issues of any nature may occur. Rather, the sole and limited purpose of the City's web and social media sites and permitted external links is to provide factual information as pertinent. The goals of the web and social media sites are to encourage increased participation, convenience and usefulness by providing a public portal for interaction with City government.

Definitions

Department Head: Mayor, Commissioners of Accounts, Finance, Public Safety, Public Works, Civil Service and Recreation, or their designee.

Offensive materials: Includes but is not limited to sexual content or images, slurs against race, religious or political beliefs, age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin or physical attributes.

Social Media: Web based and social technologies and other online means of communication that are used by large groups of people to share information. Examples include, but are not limited to Facebook, LinkedIn, Google, Yahoo, and Twitter.

Webmaster: Information Technology Systems Manager

Website: www.saratoga-springs.org and any social media site that is City owned and/or maintained for the purpose of City government.

Webmaster

Requests to establish or post on City web and social media sites must be made through the Finance Department and Information Technology (IT) Office, and will be reviewed for approval by the IT Office in consultation with the Commissioner of Finance or his/her designee. Please use attached form W-1: "Request for WEB Posting".

Parties eligible to make such requests are the City's departments: Mayor, Finance, Public Works, Public Safety, Accounts and Recreation. City Sub-Departments, Boards and Commissions may make requests through their governing department/appointing authority. These requests may be honored only if in compliance with this policy and purpose. The City strives for a uniform, identifiable, centralized web and social media presence, though certain circumstances and programs may require alternative solutions. If a concern exists about a

decision regarding the establishment of or posting on a City web or social media site, the City Council may be requested to review the decision.

In the event a City department requests the establishment of a social media site separate from the City's owned and/or maintained web site, permission must be requested and obtained from the IT Office (in consultation with the Commissioner of Finance or designee) **PRIOR** to the site's establishment. The request must include the reason for the separate web or social media site, a description of the information to be included within the web or social media site, the name and contact information of the individual having responsibility for posting and maintaining the site and must conform to this City policy on content, appearance, and generally.

In the event a City department requests that material be posted on a City web or social media site, permission must be requested and obtained from the IT Office (in consultation with the Commissioner of Finance or designee) **PRIOR** to the posting (unless said department has permission to self-post as described below). The request to the City's IT Department must include a description of the information to be posted, the name and contact information of the individual making the request. The proposed social media site must conform to this City policy on content, appearance, and protocol.

The City's web site is owned and/or maintained by the City IT Office in the Finance Department. The City owns and/or maintains approved social media sites that meet the criteria of this policy. City staff will update City owned and/or maintained web and social media sites regularly and every effort shall be made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided on these sites. However, there may be occasions where information becomes temporarily outdated pending the receipt and posting of available updates. Consequently, the City cannot expressly warrant the accuracy of web and social media site content on a 24/7 basis. Alternatively, the City provides adequate contact information for all City departments so that visitors may request verification or further information at any time.

Content

Content posted on the City's web and social media sites embodies the purpose and goals of the City and its government. The City of Saratoga Springs' owned and/or maintained web and social media sites are specifically intended to share information about *City* programs, events, and services with its community. (The City often receives requests from outside community agencies to include details on community events coordinated by outside agencies that benefit the needs of the community. The City, when feasible and appropriate, shall only include those events and/or programs that are coordinated and/or sponsored by the City on its Meetings and Events Calendar on the City's web site.)

All City web and social media owned and/or maintained sites shall be uniformly identified as the City of Saratoga Springs – Department of [Origin], and strive for a uniform appearance that identifies them as being a part of the government of the City of Saratoga Springs. Individual departmental City social media sites must link back to the official City of Saratoga Springs website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business with the City of Saratoga Springs. The City of Saratoga Springs' web site at <http://www.saratoga-springs.org/> shall remain the City's primary and predominant owned and maintained internet presence.

Permission may be granted by IT to employees in other departments who are given the prior written permission of the employee's department head to post information on City owned and/or maintained web and social media sites. City employees designated for this task must complete a training program provided by IT prior to the use of the City sites. In these situations, department heads take on the full responsibility of the content and understand and agree that any information posted on the City's owned and/or maintained sites must conform to this policy.

Any information posted that that violates any portion of this policy shall be immediately removed by IT. The department head may then appeal to the City Council, and it may be reposted upon review and approval by a vote of the City Council.

While the City of Saratoga Springs invites comments, suggestions and/or visitor input regarding the content of the City's owned and/or maintained web and social media sites, any unauthorized attempts to alter and/or upload information on these sites/server are strictly prohibited and may be punishable under the Computer Abuse and Fraud Act of 1986 and the National Information Infrastructure Protection Act.

Links

The City's web and social media sites may contain links to sites outside the City's official sites that offer helpful resources to users. The City does not control and shall not be responsible for the content of these outside links and does not endorse any information contained on those sites unless the City's web and/or social media site states otherwise.

The following criteria will be used to review and approve the placement of an outside organization's link on a City owned and/or maintained web and/or social media site links:

- Sponsored organization links must meet the criteria of this policy and its goals and objectives;
- Sponsored links must be community specific and/or offer a benefit to the community at large;
- The City reserves the right to remove any link to content deemed obscene or inappropriate.

The City's web and social media sites may provide links to sites, including but not limited to:

- Government and educational institutions;
- City sponsored Boards, Committees and Commissions;
- Generally recognized lawful, work related and community organizations;
- Sites that assist in offering lawful information pertaining to the health and safety of the City's employees and community members at large;
- Not-for-profit organizations providing information about City tourist or cultural attractions and
- The Posting of City Job Opportunities

The City's web and/or social media sites will not provide links to sites, including but not limited to:

- Candidates for local, state, or federal offices;
- Political organizations or other organizations advocating a position on a local, state, or federal issue;
- Corporate or other for-profit organizations for purposes of opinion, advertisement or endorsement;
- Individual or personal home pages for purposes of opinion, advertisement or endorsement.

Removal of Links

Links to other web and/or social media sites may be removed or replaced at the sole discretion of the City of Saratoga Springs at any time without notice.

Terms of Use, Privacy Policy, Legal Notice & Disclaimer

The following disclaimer regarding terms of use shall be posted on the City's owned and/or maintained web and social media sites:

Terms of Use

The City of Saratoga Springs makes available for your use on City owned and/or maintained web and social media sites ("these sites") information and documents subject to the terms and conditions set forth in this document (the "Terms of Use"). By accessing any of these sites, you agree to the Terms of Use. The City of Saratoga Springs reserves the right to change the Terms of Use at its sole discretion at any time. Your use of these sites will be subject to the most current version of the Terms of Use posted on the City's owned and/or maintained web and/or social media sites at the time of such use. When using any services or materials on these sites, you are subject to the posted guidelines and/or rules applicable to such services or materials within the Terms of Use. All such guidelines or rules are hereby incorporated by reference into the Terms of Use.

Your ability to utilize the City of Saratoga Springs' owned and/or maintained web and/or social media sites ("this site") is dependent upon your agreement to these terms:

1. You agree that you will not violate (or attempt to violate) the security of this site by hacking, sending viruses, or any other similar malicious or careless conduct.
2. You agree that you will not utilize the communication methods found within this site for the communication of any material that may reasonably be considered scurrilous or offensive.
3. You agree not to upload (or attempt to upload) content of any type to this site.
4. You acknowledge that you have no right to the intellectual property associated with this site and that you have only a limited right to use this site.
5. You acknowledge that the City of Saratoga Springs does not warrant the accuracy or availability of this site.
6. You acknowledge that the City of Saratoga Springs is not responsible for any loss, damage, or injury that you may have as a result of your use of this site.
7. You agree to be bound by the laws applicable in the City of Saratoga Springs, State of New York and The United States of America with respect to your use of this site and you agree are legally responsible for any court proceedings relating to your use of this site.
8. You agree to grant the City of Saratoga Springs all ownership and intellectual property rights of the content of any e-mail that you send to the City.
9. All information and materials provided on this site are the property of the City of Saratoga Springs. The City retains copyright on all text, graphic images, and other content found on this site. Use of the City logo is prohibited for any non-governmental purpose. Commercial use of text, logos, photos, and other graphics is prohibited without the express written permission of the City of Saratoga Springs. The City of Saratoga Springs reserves all other rights.

If you DO NOT agree to ALL of these terms, please log off of this site immediately.

Privacy Policy

The privacy of visitors to the City of Saratoga Springs' web and social media site visitors is important to the City. The City will use the utmost discretion with the use of personal information obtained through the web and social media site. If a user sends the City an electronic mail message that contains personally identifying information, or if a user fills out a form online, the City will use this personal

information to respond to a request. While the City will make every effort to protect your personal information, sharing any information via the Internet is not without risk and you are encouraged to use discretion when sharing personal information electronically. As a governmental agency, the City of Saratoga Springs is governed by open records laws. Your e-mail address and other identifying information may be subject to these open records laws if requested. In addition, certain e-mail may constitute a public record and is subject to disclosure under state law. Otherwise, we do not share personal identifying information with any third party without your permission. The City does track the traffic patterns on its web site from information automatically provided by the browsers of site visitors. This information includes the IP address of your computer or network, the date, time, and page you visited on our site, your browser and operating system. This information is used by City staff to analyze data, measure server performance, and improve the content of our web site. This information may also be used to determine abuse by a web and/or social media site user and may be used to bring that individual to justice. Any information disclosed to a social media site is outside the control of the City and will be subject to the privacy policy of the social media site provider.

Legal Notice

Communication made through e-mail or any other online messaging system shall in no way be deemed to constitute legal notice to the City of Saratoga Springs or any of its officers, employees, agents, or representatives where notice to the City is required by any law, rule, regulation, or contract.

Disclaimer

The materials and information contained on or obtained from this web and/or social media site are distributed "as is" without warranties of any kind, either express or implied, including without limitation, warranties of title or implied warranties of merchantability of fitness for a particular purpose. Information contained on the web and/or social media sites, including information obtained from external links thereon, is provided without any representation of any kind as to accuracy or content and should be verified by the user. The City of Saratoga Springs is not responsible for any special, indirect, incidental or consequential damages that may arise from the use of, or the inability to use, the web and/or social media sites, and/or the materials contained on the site. This is the case whether the materials contained on the web and/or social media site are provided by the City of Saratoga Springs, or by a third party. Data contained on the web and social media sites are subject to change without notice.

The City's owned and/or maintained social media sites supervised and controlled by the City. Links to other Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views contained therein. The City does not control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness or completeness of information contained on a linked website; does not endorse the organizations sponsoring linked websites or the views they express or the products/services they offer; cannot and does not authorize the use of copyrighted materials contained in linked websites - users must request such authorization from the sponsor of the linked website; and does not guarantee that external websites comply with Section 508 (Accessibility Requirements) of the Rehabilitation Act.

Indemnity

You the User agree to indemnify and hold the City of Saratoga Springs, its departments, elected and appointed officials, employees and agents, harmless from any loss, liability, claim or demand, including, but not limited to, reasonable attorney's fees, made by any third party due to or arising out of your use of the City's web and social media sites in violation of this use agreement and/or arising from a breach of this use agreement and/or

any breach of your representations and warranties set forth in this use agreement and/or any content that you post on, through or in connection with the City's web and social media sites.

Warning

Information published on the City's web and/or social media sites may be retained by the social media site or search engines that are not within the control and/or legal purview of the City of Saratoga Springs. This may render such information available even after it has been removed from these sites. If information is posted that is incorrect or not in compliance with this policy, it may stay in the public view after it has been removed from the original published location.

Computer Policy for City Employees

The City of Saratoga Springs has a Computer Policy for City Employees designed to ensure the use of the City's computer systems in an appropriate and productive manner. All employees are required to abide by these guidelines, and encouraged to review this policy in conjunction with the Web and Social Media Policy. **Violations of this policy may subject an employee to administrative action(s), up to and including formal disciplinary charges.**

Sample Form W-1
Request for WEB Posting

NEW POSTING

UPDATED POSTING

REQUEST FOR REMOVAL

1. **ITEM TO BE POSTED** *(Please describe below, and attach in pdf or other posting-ready format. If you need formatting assistance, please advise, please request posting guidelines for more detailed information):*

2. **LOCATION** *(Please describe exactly where you would like the link to be placed, for example City Web, Departments, Finance, City Budgets):*

3. **LINK AND ARTICLE TITLE** *(The **Link** is usually the first thing that visitors will click on to get to your document. The **Article Title** is usually the second thing that visitors will click on to get to your document. Please include the exact words for the Link and the Article title. These are often the same, but can be different.)*

Link

Title:

4. **CHANGE REQUESTED** *(If you would like a change to something already posted on the web, please describe it here):*

5. **DATES TO BE POSTED** *(no ending date indicates permanent posting or until removal is requested)*

Starting: _____

Ending: _____

6. **OTHER:**

DOCUMENT SHOULD APPEAR IN “ANNOUNCEMENTS” SECTION IN UPPER RIGHT CORNER OF WEB SITE

ITEM SHOULD BE LINKED TO CALENDAR EVENT ON _____ TITLED _____

Please allow 2 business days for normal postings to be made, contact IT directly when form is submitted for items needing immediate posting.