
PURPOSE

As more and more citizens participate in Social Media platforms to receive and share information, it is important the City of Edgewater utilize these types of technologies to enhance customer service and community outreach and to encourage citizen involvement. The purpose of this policy is to establish a standard approach and a consistent method for the City to share information across Social Media platforms.

The City of Edgewater is a Florida municipality. The goals of the City of Edgewater Social Media Policy (the "Policy") are:

- To increase public awareness of the City's programs, policies and services
- To promote the value and importance of the City's programs, policies and services among government officials, civic leaders, residents, business owners and the public
- To maintain open, professional and responsive communications with members of the public and the news media

This Policy and its provisions apply to and serve as a guide to any person who wishes to share information or comments.

APPLICABILITY

The City of Edgewater's social media platforms are intended to be "family friendly." When applicable, the city uses platform provided content moderation/filtering options to limit foul or obscene content. The City of Edgewater does actively monitor the social media platforms used by the City, and will remove inappropriate content as defined below, without prior notice, and as soon as possible. The City shall reserve the right to remove and/or block anyone who posts inappropriate material as determined by the City of Edgewater.

City of Edgewater Social Media communications are to be used to share public announcements and information. City of Edgewater social media pages are intended to be a limited public forum in which the City retains discretion to limit the subjects being discussed. While we encourage you to share your thoughts—whether supportive or critical—we ask that you limit your comments to the topics presented. We also ask that you be respectful and courteous in your comments, avoiding vulgar, abusive and defamatory language, and that you comply with the City of Edgewater Comment Policy stated below. A posting on a City of Edgewater social media page constitutes acceptance of these terms.

Users who submit content to any media of the City have read, understand and agree to the following terms and conditions by virtue of such use:

1. I am submitting content voluntarily and on my own behalf.
2. The content I post reflects my own original thoughts or work.
3. I understand that the City of Edgewater has the right to re-post any comments, photos or videos that I submit on City of Edgewater social media pages.

4. I have read and understand the Policy, including the right of the City to remove comments for reasons listed below and I understand that any comments I make are “public records” as described below.

CITY OF EDGEWATER COMMENT POLICY

User-generated posts/comments may be subject to rejection or be hidden when the content:

- is off-topic or out of context
- is repetitive with repeated posting of identical or very similar content in a counter-productive manner
- contains obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, threatening, discriminatory or disrespectful language
- contains sexual content, any links to sexual content, or pornographic material
- contains offensive terms that target protected classes
- is threatening, harassing or discriminatory
- incites or promotes violence or harm against another person
- advertises or promotes a commercial product or service, or a commercial entity or individual
- contains confidential or proprietary information that is unlawful to disclose
- contains personal identifying information or sensitive personal information
- contains profanity or content that is abusive, threatening or inflammatory
- promotes, seeks to elicit, or fosters violence or promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination of any kind
- is spam or promotional content
- promotes any personal business, interest, service or product
- supports, promotes or opposes any political party, person campaigning for elected office, or any ballot proposition or election item of any kind
- is misleading or contains deceptive statements or information
- contains personal or character attacks
- contains advertisements not authorized by the City
- contains Hyperlinks to third party websites unless posted by the City’s authorized staff for links to partnered/sponsored organizations and bona-fide governmental agencies, or other legitimate organizations as the City deems appropriate
- contains information that may compromise the safety or security of the City, its officials, City employees and the public
- violates or appears to violate a legal ownership interest of any other party, such as but not limited to matters or items that are or may be subject to copyright, patent and trademark protection.
- advocates for or constitutes any illegal activity or violation of any City policy or any local, state or federal law
- knowingly or recklessly communicates false or defamatory information about a person or organization
- attempts to coerce or extort another person.
- Conducts any commercial activity such as offering, providing or purchasing products or services of any kind

The following guidelines must be displayed to users on all social media sites or made available via hyperlink.

PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

The City of Edgewater's social media sites are subject to applicable public records laws contained in Chapter 119, Florida Statutes. Any content maintained in a social media format related to agency business, including communication posted by the City and communication received from citizens, is a public record subject to disclosure.

All comments posted on City of Edgewater social media pages are considered "public records" under the Florida Public Records Law (Chapter 119, Florida Statutes). The comments will also be archived by the City in accordance with the Public Records Law. The City will use a third-party service provider to automatically capture and retain all social media interaction on City-owned social media accounts. Any comments that are rejected or hidden are also considered "public records". Please note: Even comments that are removed will be archived and are deemed "public records" as discussed above.

The City reserves the right to remove and deny access to any City site if access is sought by any user or users whose comments are identified by the City as inappropriate and unacceptable for display on any City social media pages, as outlined in the comment policy above. The City also reserves the right to discontinue any site at any time. Practical and legal considerations may sometimes constrain, prevent, or prohibit discussion of certain topics, such as but not limited to court cases, through such media. Comments that offer thoughtful criticism of the City as an organization and City initiatives are not expected to be removed except as provided for in this Policy.

In general, individual complaints, concerns, or service requests will not be addressed via social media. Users shall not engage in back-and-forth conversation regarding topics that are or may become complex, controversial, or otherwise sensitive.

DISCLAIMERS

Comments posted by others do not reflect the opinions or policies of the City of Edgewater or its Departments. No endorsement of a commercial enterprise is intended by the inclusion of others' comments on this page, the "liking" or "friending" of a commenter, or the inclusion of a link to another's page or website.

The City of Edgewater makes no legal promises or representations regarding the accuracy or completeness of the information contained on this site. Additionally, the City does not offer any express or implied warranty as to the fitness or use of this information.

EXTERNAL LINKS

The provision of direct links should not be construed as an endorsement or sponsorship of these external sites, their content, or their hosts. The City specifically disavows legal responsibility for what a user may find on another site, whether or not operated by the City. The views and opinions of the authors of documents published on or linked to the City's social media accounts do not necessarily state or reflect the opinion, policy or position of the City.

The City of Edgewater is not responsible for the content, quality, accuracy or completeness of any offsite materials referenced by or linked through the City's social media accounts. By using the City's social networking sites, the user acknowledges and accepts the risk of injury or damage from viewing, hearing, downloading or storing such materials which risk rests entirely with the user. The City is not responsible for any materials stored on other social networking sites or websites, nor is it liable for any inaccurate, defamatory, offensive or illegal materials found on other social networking sites or websites.

The City does not endorse any content, viewpoint, products or services linked from its social networking sites and shall not be held liable for any losses caused by reliance on the accuracy, reliability or timeliness of such information. The City does not warrant the accuracy or reliability of or endorse any products or service providers listed or linked to its site.

DENIAL OF ACCESS

The City of Edgewater reserves the right to deny access to any City of Edgewater social media sites for any individual, who violates the City of Edgewater’s Social Media Terms of Use, at any time and without prior notice.

EMERGENCY OR NON-EMERGENCY REQUESTS FOR POLICE/FIRE/EMS ASSISTANCE

The posting of requests for police, fire or EMS assistance, regardless if it is of an emergency or non-emergency nature, is discouraged and will not guarantee a response by the City of Edgewater or any emergency service provider. In case of an emergency, or if police assistance is needed, please dial 911. Non-emergency police/fire/EMS matters can be reported by calling 386-424-2000.

FACEBOOK'S COMMUNITY OF STANDARDS

All comments posted to any City of Edgewater Facebook site are bound by Facebook’s Community Standards and the City of Edgewater reserves the right to report any violation of Facebook’s Community Standards to Facebook with the intent of Facebook taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action.

TWITTER RULES

When applicable, the City of Edgewater reserves the right to report any violation of the Twitter Rules, with the intent of Twitter taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action

YOUTUBE COMMUNITY GUIDELINES

When applicable, the City of Edgewater reserves the right to report any violation of the YouTube Community Guidelines, with the intent of YouTube taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action.

INSTAGRAM COMMUNITY GUIDELINES

When applicable, the City of Edgewater reserves the right to report any violation of the Instagram Community Guidelines, with the intent of Instagram taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action.

Approved by: Glenn A. Irby
Glenn Irby, City Manager

05/15/23
Date

Attest: Bonnie Zlotnik
Bonnie Zlotnik, City Clerk

