

SECTION 2: Employment and Compensation

XXVIII. Electronic Communications/Social Media:

City equipment used to communicate, such as cell phones, text messaging, computers, email, and internet, should primarily be used for business purposes. While personal usage will be allowed, guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable uses will apply at all times. Failure to comply with this policy could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

A. Business Expectations

1. **Do not expect privacy.** The City may access, read, monitor, intercept, copy, and delete your communications if the City deems it appropriate and business reasons exist to do so. Information that passes through, or is stored in or on any City network is considered public information per requirements of the Texas Public Information Act (Texas Government Code 522) and subject to disclosure or release to the public. Thus, you should not expect privacy in your communications tools utilized via the city's systems/networks now or in the future. This includes accessing personal accounts through city equipment such as email, Facebook, Twitter, MySpace or other such forums for communication. Communications, personal or business, to or from city equipment should be business professional.
2. Personal use of the computer systems, internet, email and cell phones are allowed at the City, but must be minimal and not interfere with the employee's productivity nor pre-empt any business activity.
3. Supervisors may be more restrictive in personal use of computer systems/equipment as deemed necessary for departmental operations or if abuse by an individual is found.
4. Ethical behavior of government employees and the appropriate use of government resources apply to the use of electronic communications and computer systems supplied by the City.

B. Acceptable Uses

1. Use of city computers/communication equipment is appropriate for:
 - a) Communication and information exchange directly related to City business or operations,
 - b) For professional development to maintain any job related or required certification, or
 - c) To communicate appropriately amongst employees/council/citizens on city-related topics.

C. Unacceptable Uses

1. Use of city computers/communication equipment may NOT be used for any of the following:
 - a) To buy goods or services for personal use using a City provided purchase card or purchase order.
 - b) For any purpose, which violates federal, state, or local laws.
 - c) For purposes unrelated to city business or operations, except as allowed in A 2.

- d) To access or distribute any material which is offensive, inappropriate, harassing, or sexually explicit or in violation of others laws or internal policies.
- e) To intentionally copy any software, electronic file, program or data using City provided electronic tools without a prior, good faith determination that such copying is, in fact, permissible. Any efforts to obtain permission should be adequately documented.
- f) To intentionally misrepresent yourself electronically as another person, unless explicitly authorized to do so by the person you are representing, or
- g) To use social media or other communication tools to defame, disparage, threaten or otherwise harm others (“cyber-smearing” or “cyber-bullying.”)
- h) To disclose the City’s confidential or proprietary information to others who do not have a need to know.

D. Internet Use

1. Use of the Internet is a revocable privilege. This privilege can be withdrawn from an employee for any reason as determined by the employee’s chain of command and/or City Manager if used inappropriately or in a manner which negatively reflects on the employee, department or the City.
2. It is expected that employees will use this to help research city-related information and knowledge as appropriate.
3. Personal use is allowed, but should be minimal and not interfere with city operations or efficiency.

E. E-mails/Text Messaging

Use email and texts on city-issued cell phones appropriately and be business conscious. Simply deleting an e-mail or text message from your systems account does not necessarily destroy the message. This message, even if deleted from your computer, may remain on the City’s e-mail server for any given period of time. Phone companies have security methods for accessing old text messages which are subject to Open Records Requests as well.

F. Social Media

1. “Social Media” includes forms of discussion and information sharing such as social networks, blogs, video sharing, podcasts, wikis, message boards and online forums. Examples of social media applications include, but are not limited to, Google and Yahoo groups, Wikipedia, Vine, MySpace and Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, Twitter, LinkedIn and news media comment sharing/blogging. This policy covers other social media applications and tools that may occur in the future and not named herein.
2. Departments wanting to create and maintain Department-specific social media applications/site separate from the City’s primary application must obtain approval from the City Manager.
 - a) Should departments engage in conversations with citizens and are asked questions directly related to the City’s operations or business, responses should be approved through the City Manager. Each department’s Social Media Liaison is responsible for communicating with the City Manager and gaining approval.

3. Freedom of Information Act and e-discovery laws and policies apply to social media content.
 4. Outside the workplace, you have a right to participate in social media and networks using your personal e-mail address. Information and communications that you publish on personal online sites should never be attributed or sufficiently related to the City or appear to be endorsed by, or to have originated from, the City.
 5. Personal communication denigrating your employer, “cyber-smearing,” or “cyber-bullying” of other employees is prohibited conduct and may result in disciplinary action if they are found to defame, disparage, threaten or otherwise harm others.”
 6. If you choose to disclose your affiliation with the City of Celina, you must treat all communication with the disclosure as professional communications governed by this and other organizational policies. Any individual has the right to come forward and report any inappropriate activity on an employee’s social media account.
- G. The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable laws.
- H. Any violations to these policies will be reviewed by the Human Resources department and the employee’s supervisor to determine if any disciplinary actions are required.