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SOCIAL MEDIA PERSONAL USE

I. INTRODUCTION

The City recognizes that many employees have personal social media web pages and engage in various social media activities. As such, the City respects employees' right to express personal opinions when using personal social media and does not retaliate or discriminate against employees who use personal social media for political or other lawful purposes. However, employees are personally responsible for content they post on personal social media.

Social media come in many forms including, but not limited to, internet forums, blogs, online profiles, wikis, podcasts, pictures and video, email, instant messaging, music sharing, voice over IP, and others. Social media also include social websites and online communities for business and personal use, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Yelp, YouTube, Twitter, message boards, and chat rooms.

The purpose of this regulation is to caution employees and volunteers regarding their use of personal social media as it relates to the City of Boise. This regulation applies to all City employees and volunteers.

II. NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

The City may monitor content, comments, and/or discussions about the City on social media made by anyone at any time. Content posted to the internet is immediate and does not expire. Users of social media should be aware that they are not anonymous when they make online comments. Even if a person posts anonymously or under a pseudonym, their identity may still be determined. Utilization of privacy settings for personal use of social media is recommended. However persons who use social media should be mindful that once content is placed online, it is no longer under their control and content shared via private social media does not always stay private.

Employees should have no expectation of privacy while using City digital equipment or facilities for any purpose including the use of electronic communications. Regardless of password use and privacy settings, the City may retrieve, review and/or monitor or log internet usage and content found on City systems and digital equipment, including deleted messages, posts, or comments without notice to the employee. Therefore, users have no expectation of privacy in the use of the City's systems or equipment to download, transmit, post, comment, or store information.

Nothing in this regulation bestows an individual right nor may it be construed to provide an expectation of privacy.

III. EMPLOYEE PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

An employee may access social media while at work within the parameters of the City's policies and regulations. Users are expected to limit use to personal time, such as breaks, lunch periods and off-duty time. If an employee's use of social media becomes excessive, interferes with or is disruptive to City business or productivity, or negatively affects the employee's job duties, the employee may be subject to discipline.

When posting to personal social media, if an employee speaks about job-related content or makes reference to the City, people may perceive the individual to be talking on behalf of the City. If the employee is not acting in an official and/or authorized City capacity, the employee shall use a disclaimer and make it clear that the views are not necessarily reflective of the views of the City. An example of such disclaimer is "The views, opinions, ideas, and information expressed on this site are my own and neither reflects the views of my employer nor is in any way attributable to the City of Boise."

Participation in social media, whether by City or non-City internet resources and whether made while on or off duty must not violate the privacy rights of other City employees, customers, or business partners, or any City policy or regulation, including but not limited to the following:

- A. City Code of Ethics
- B. Equal Employment Opportunity
- C. Standards of Conduct
- D. Information Technology Acceptable Use
- E. Political Activities
- F. Proprietary Rights
- G. Violence Free Workplace
- H. Guidelines for City of Boise Logo Use

When participating in social media employees are expected to know and follow all City policies and regulations. They are also expected to be respectful, truthful, accurate, and not engage in retaliatory behavior.

IV. PROHIBITED CONDUCT IN PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA

Employees may be disciplined up to and including termination for engaging in any of the following in their personal online social media activity:

- A. Promoting or taking part in activities which violate federal, state, or local law.
- B. Threatening harm, directly or indirectly, to any City employee or City customer, business partner, vendor, or supplier.
- C. Making false or misleading statements about City employees, the City, City customers, business partners, vendors, or suppliers.
- D. Making disparaging remarks toward or about any City employee, the City, City customers, business partners, vendors, and/or suppliers that are based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship status, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression or other characteristic protected by law.

- E. Using social media to bully, harass, or retaliate against City employees or City customers, business partners, vendors, or suppliers.
- F. Posting content or making comments that purport to express the opinions of the City. If a comment or post could reasonably be interpreted to express the opinions of the City, then the employee shall state that the comment/post is a personal opinion in the manner previously described in this regulation. Only an individual officially authorized by his/her department may post or comment on behalf of the City.

The fact that the subject of the social media content is not specifically named does not constitute a defense or excuse for City employees to engage in behavior via their personal social media that violates City policies and regulations.

Employees are expected to report known violations of this regulation to Department Directors, Public Information Officers, supervisors, or to the Human Resources Department.

V. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY AND DUTY TO REPORT

Employees are personally responsible for the content they publish via personal social media. Conduct that violates any aspect of this regulation is subject to investigation and discipline regardless of whether such conduct may have occurred away from work or on non-working time. Employees with questions regarding whether certain activities fall within the parameters of this regulation are encouraged to contact their supervisor or Human Resources.