



Code of Conduct for City of Spencer Officials

It is the policy of this government that in all cases its council and board members will perform their duties for the benefit of all the citizens and constituents of the City of Spencer. They shall conduct the duties of their position with loyalty, integrity and impartiality, without allowing prejudice, favoritism or the opportunity for personal gain to influence their decisions or actions or to interfere with serving the public interest. The purpose of this policy is to establish legal and ethical standards of conduct for all officials and employees of the government and to require disclosures by all officials and employees of private, financial or other interests in matters that may affect the government. All government officials shall adhere to the following code of ethics to build public trust and ensure equitable treatment for all.

Respect, Caring, and Attitude

The City of Spencer's officials should treat all individuals in a respectful, courteous, and professional manner. Council and board members shall not exceed their authority or breach any laws or ask others to do so and should work in full compliance with others unless prohibited from doing so by law.

Every council and board member is viewed as a representative of the government and should display loyalty, honesty, courtesy, reliability and helpfulness whether they are receiving criticism or answering a question from private citizens or from fellow board members or city staff. A council and board member's attitude is a reflection upon the government's service.

The creation and maintenance of positive relationships is important. Council and board members should strive to find solutions to citizen's issues and problems and offer suggestions for improvement to appropriate staff leadership without malice.

Fairness

All council and board members should treat others with impartiality and equity. No special favors or privileges should be provided or accepted that could be perceived as influencing the performance of one's duties. Applicable laws and regulations will be applied impartially to everyone.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

It is understood that council and board members do have the First Amendment Right to free speech and to dialogue with constituents. There should be decorum in the speech and respect toward others since council and board members not only represent themselves, but also the other board members and the city as a whole.

This policy provides guidance for council and board members use of social media, which should be broadly understood for purposes of this policy to include blogs, wikis, microblogs, message boards, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites, and other sites and services that permit users to share information with others in a contemporaneous manner.

PROCEDURES

The following principles apply to professional use of social media on behalf of The City of Spencer as well as personal use of social media when referencing the City of Spencer. All council and board members need to know and adhere to the thought of respect for the City of Spencer is the core of their duties.

Social Media Platforms intended for the dissemination of information for the City of Spencer, or for where the main topics at hand discuss the City of Spencer, its staff, or its elected officials, is not to be used in ANY political or disrespectful dialogue.

Any misuse of the platforms will be cause for censure or dismissal from the respective person's board.

When using social media in reference to the City of Spencer. Council and board members should be aware of the effect their actions may have on their images, as well as the city's image. The information that board members post or publish may be public information for a long time.

Council and board members should use their best judgment in posting material that is neither inappropriate nor harmful to the City of Spencer, its employees, customers and other board members. Although not an exclusive list, some specific examples of prohibited social media conduct include posting commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous, or that can create a hostile work environment.

(If a board member would like to use their own social media platform for dialogue, A disclaimer should be used, such as this: **"The postings on this site are my own and do not represent positions, strategies or opinions of the City of Spencer."** It is highly recommended that board members keep city related social media accounts separate from personal accounts. Board members are then assuming ALL legal responsibilities for their commentary.)

Council and board members are not to publish, post or release any information that is considered confidential or not public. If there are questions about what is considered confidential, board members should check with the City Manager.

Social media networks, blogs and other types of online content sometimes generate press and media attention or legal questions. Board members should refer these inquiries to authorized spokespersons (i.e. City Manager, Mayor).

Employee and Board Member Interaction

All council and board members are required to treat city staff and employees with respect. Use the Golden Rule: **TREAT OTHERS THE WAY YOU WANT TO BE TREATED.**

If employees find encounter a situation that threatens to become antagonistic, employees should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and seek the advice of a supervisor.

Date _____

Board Name _____

Board Chairperson _____

Board Member _____