

City of Salisbury, Maryland

Social Media Comment Policy

Approved: 8/16/2021

A. Purpose: The City of Salisbury and its departments' Facebook, Twitter, Instagram platforms help promote and share information about the City and its initiatives, events, announcements, services and more. Social media provides an easily accessible resource for both residents of and visitors to the City of Salisbury. The purpose of this document is to set forth the City's policies and procedures regarding comments to the City's social media websites with the understanding that the goals of the City's social media accounts are to increase the public's knowledge, trust, and use of City services; promote the value and importance of City services among and between governing officials, civic leaders, and the general public; communicate emergencies and other information, and to maintain open and responsive communication with members of the public.

This Social Media Comment Policy is subject to change at any time and without notice.

B. Ownership: All City of Salisbury official social media accounts are limited public forums for discussion with and among users about the posted initiatives, events, services, and more. All City of Salisbury social media accounts are owned and maintained by the City of Salisbury.

The City of Salisbury has the following social media accounts:

FACEBOOK

- City of Salisbury, Maryland
- Downtown Salisbury
- Salisbury Police Department
- Salisbury Fire Department
- Salisbury Zoo
- Green SBY
- Downtown Salisbury Trolley
- City of Salisbury, MD Neighborhood Relations
- Housing First Salisbury, Maryland
- National Folk Festival in Salisbury, MD
- Salisbury Disability Advisory Committee

INSTAGRAM

- cityofsby
- downtown_sby
- salisburysbravest

INSTAGRAM (cont'd)

- officialsalisburyzoo
- sby_green
- sbytrolley
- spdrecruitment
- salisburypoliceexplorerunit710

TWITTER

- CityofSBY
- SalisburyPD

C. General Policy: The City of Salisbury does not discriminate based on viewpoint but may remove comments and restrict access to users for violating this Policy. Comments posted will be monitored regularly but not 24/7. The City reserves the right to deny access to its Social Media Sites to any individual who violates this policy at any time and without prior notice.

D. Terms of Service: By posting or commenting on the City of Salisbury's social media sites, users agree to the following "terms of use":

- Comments should relate directly to the topic or purpose of the post;
- Users shall not engage in personal attacks, insults, or threatening language;
- Comments shall not contain private or personal information published without consent;
- Comments shall not contain threats of violence or threats to public safety;
- There shall be no disruptively repetitive content;
- There shall be no hyperlinks to material that is not directly related to the discussion;
- Conduct in violation of any federal, state or local law, or encouragement of illegal activity is absolutely prohibited; and
- Comments shall not contain content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, marital status, gender, age, or sexual orientation.

1. A comment posted by a member of the public on any City of Salisbury owned social media site is the opinion of the commentator or poster only, and the publication of a comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by, the City of Salisbury, nor do such comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the City. Some of the links on this and subsequent pages may lead to resources outside the City of Salisbury municipal government. The presence of these links should not be construed as an endorsement by the City of these sites or their content.

2. The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the City of Salisbury is not obligated

to take such actions, and the City disclaims any and all responsibility and liability for any materials that the City deems inappropriate for posting, which cannot be removed in an expeditious and otherwise timely manner.

3. The City specifically disclaims any and all liability for any claims or damages that may result from providing the City's social media accounts or information it contains, including any websites maintained by third parties and linked to the City's accounts.

4. By posting a comment, users agree to indemnify the City of Salisbury, its officers and employees from and against all liabilities, judgments, damages, and costs incurred by any of them which arise out of or are related to content posted by users. If a user does not agree to these terms, the individual should not use the City of Salisbury's social media sites as a violation of these terms may lead to legal liability.

5. The City does not guarantee the authenticity, accuracy, appropriateness nor security of external links, websites or content linked thereto.

6. All users of a City of Salisbury social media site are also subject to the site's own privacy policy. The City has no control over a third party site's privacy policy page unless otherwise stated. The City of Salisbury has no control over content, commercial advertisements or other postings produced by said social media site.

7. Users may be temporarily or permanently restricted from accessing the City's social media platforms if they repeatedly and consistently violate this Policy. To contest the restriction of access to a social media platform, a user must submit to the City's communication team, at rbrown@salisbury.md and cdemone@salisbury.md, a written statement providing grounds for reinstatement. Requests shall be responded to on a reasonably timely basis and access shall be restored if it is determined that the grounds for reinstatement are sufficient.

E. Retention Policy and Public Information Act Request Compliance:

The above guidelines and disclaimers (Terms of Use) must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink. City social media sites are public record and are subject to the Maryland Public Information Act. Any content removed based on these guidelines is retained by the City of Salisbury, including the time, date and identity of the poster when available, in accordance with the City's policy on the retention of such information. Users may request this information via the City's Public Information Act request page.