



City Council Social Media Disclaimer

City Council use of Social Media: Disclaimer policy

In recognizing the importance of communicating with its constituency in all communications methods, the Kirkland City Council has adopted guidelines to govern the use of social media by individual Councilmembers.

Councilmembers may post to social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and online forums, as long as a disclaimer about their views is included. The disclaimer ensures the view expressed in the comment is that of the member; not of the full Council. The disclaimer also acknowledges that comments by other Councilmembers regarding the same issue are limited by the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) which requires public noticing of a quorum of Councilmembers discussing official City business. Specifically, if more than three Councilmembers are involved in a conversation via a social media forum, it could be considered a meeting; and if no notice was given regarding the meeting, it would not be in compliance with the OPMA.

Social media sites may not be used by Councilmembers to conduct City Council business, particularly legal and fiscal matters that have not already been released to the public. Posts by Councilmembers regarding quasi-judicial issues, where the Council acts in a manner similar to a judge, are prohibited.

All City Council communications including, but not limited to, email, social media posts, and text messages may be subject to the Public Records Act.

Specifically, the policy states the following disclaimers should be included in whole or referenced with a link to the disclaimers for all communications initiated by Councilmembers in open forums:

- The views expressed represent the views of the author and may not reflect the views of the Kirkland City Council.
- Responses to this communication by other Councilmembers may be limited by the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act under which a policy discussion must be held in an open public meeting if a quorum of the City Council participates.
- Comments posted in response to a Councilmember-initiated communication may be subject to public disclosure under the Public Records Act.

Council members using the disclaimer, the policy can be found at www.kirklandwa.gov/councildisclaimer.