



## CITY COMMUNICATION POLICY AND STYLE GUIDE

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish City of Woodburn’s policy and guidelines for ensuring all City communication is understandable by all members of the Woodburn community and to accommodate the many ways people access civic information. This Style Guide is designed to help City employees to communicate with people online in a way that serves the entirety of the community.

### 2. Scope

This policy covers all employees, including seasonal, temporary, volunteers, and interns.

This policy shall not be applied to prohibit or infringe upon an employee’s privileged or protected speech.

### 3. Policy

It is the policy of City of Woodburn to have a standard communication style to serve all its constituents in a civil and unbiased manner. The City strives to disseminate information from the City to its residents to provide accurate, helpful and timely information about the City for the general public; promote the interests of the City in concert with City’s goals; encourage participation in City government; and provide ongoing education to increase understanding about how the City operates.

All the content published by the City of Woodburn should meet the standards outlined below.

**Simplicity:** All written communication should help community members to access and understand City services, policies and procedures. To this end, writers should try to use short sentences and simple words to convey information.

**Equity:** City communications should touch everyone in our community. We reach the greatest number of people in our community by using clear language, utilizing and complying with the City’s Limited English Proficiency language access plan for purposes of determining when translation is needed for vital City communications, using various communications channels, and accessing ourselves with benchmarks.

**Trust:** City of Woodburn writing should convey a sense of authority and respect--we want to be a trusted source of information for the Woodburn community. We accomplish this by ensuring our information is accurate and making it clear that the City of Woodburn is the author of City content.

**Access:** We create non-text alternatives, large print, speech/audio options, and symbols, and can be accessed using all user agents and assistive technologies. We also work with the City's ADA Coordinator to ensure we're complying with the law.

#### **4. Ownership and Monitoring**

All information and communications in any format, stored by any means on or received via City of Woodburn's electronic equipment, facilities or services is the sole property of City of Woodburn. The City is the sole owner and may monitor and disclose contents and usage at any time of any Information Technology Resource provided to users. There is no reasonable expectation of privacy in the use of any Information Technology Resource.

The City's website is the City's primary public communication presence. When possible, any other media publication, including news releases, social media posts, etc., should refer to an original source found on the City's website.

All City communication channels are subject to Oregon public records and record retention laws, rules, and policies. Any content maintained in an online format (website/social media) that is related to City business may be subject to public disclosure.

Each City communication medium shall be administered and monitored by City staff. Each medium falls under the overall supervision of the Public Affairs and Communications Manager. For all City entities (boards, committees, and departments), the City shall maintain administrative rights to all communication channels (website, social media, newsletters, print mailings, press releases, etc.).

#### **5. Media Inquiries**

Any media inquiries received by any City employee should be referred immediately to the City Manager and Public Affairs and Communications Manager. Due to the often-short deadlines for media outlets, it is important that all employees respond as soon as possible when the City Manager or Public Affairs and Communications Manager requests it.

All television, radio, newspaper, or other media inquiries regarding sensitive or controversial issues must always be immediately referred to the City Manager. The City Manager will then work with any pertinent staff to gather the necessary information and coordinate a response.

## 6. Style Guide for Written Material

Content creators should write in a way that is friendly and informative but also conveys authority and builds trust. Avoid using City-specific language or jargon. Never assume readers have a deep understanding of a subject, and when you are describing a complicated issue, explain the point in clear language and, when necessary, provide context for the topic.

- Address the user when possible. Be polite and clear. Use an active Voice.
- Match Your Tone to the Content - we write about things ranging from the tragic to the celebratory. Be sure to match your tone to the tone of the topic you are writing. When writing about every day and positive events like community gatherings, celebrations, elections or other good news, use an energetic and enthusiastic tone. When you are writing about serious or urgent events like crime, natural disasters, protests, public transit updates or other topics related to public safety it is critical that you write in a way that is unbiased, informative and professional and use simple and concise language. Refer to facts and avoid all speculation. Do not use exclamation points and only include links if they direct the reader to further critical information.
- Readability – Aim to write for readability by using plain language and choosing short, simple words whenever. You can test the readability of your writing with an online readability tool like the Hemingway App [www.hemingwayapp.com](http://www.hemingwayapp.com).
- Contractions such as you're, it's, or we've can be used. Use short words and sentences. Provide just enough details so the user can complete the task. Leave out details that may distract or confuse your reader. Keep the text short and easy for quick reading. Use bulleted or numbered lists if it helps make the information more clear to the reader.
- Avoid Jargon, Idioms, and Acronyms - Acronyms and jargon are words that only make sense to experts, Avoid using specialized terms whenever you can. Instead, use simple terms that everyone can understand. Where jargon or acronyms are unavoidable, always explain what these mean, write out the full meaning of the acronym the first time it appears, Idioms, or figurative expressions, such as “state of the art” or “rain or shine” may be difficult for persons who do not speak English as a first language or persons with cognitive or neurological disabilities to understand.
- Organize Your Content -When writing, it is important to present information in a way that is consistent and easy to understand. If you use headings, they should describe the topic or purpose of the web page.
- The use of photos and images can enrich the visual impact of the website, but it is essential to consider and select pictures carefully. Images should be used to enhance the content, but not every piece of content needs a picture. When you are adding an image to web content, consider if adding an image supports the goal of the page. To ensure accessibility, when you do use an image, you must provide alternative text. The photo name should be a brief but complete description of the photo. When uploaded your photo description will be permanent so ensure that it will be clear in several years what the photo describes.



- Make sure the text is gender-neutral wherever possible. When you write about groups of people, use gender-inclusive language. When possible, use neutral terms instead of gendered alternatives such as server instead of waitress.
- Font choices should be limited to: Arial, Helvetica, Open Sans, Times New Roman, Century Gothic, or Calibri. Cursive fonts should not be used. Use 12 font size or larger when possible.
  - Font choice may vary depending on document type, (Century Gothic for City Council reports, Council Bills, and memos, Calibri or Times for most legal correspondence, contracts, or legal opinions). Font choice may be determined by each Department; however, consistency must be maintained (i.e., documents of the same nature may not utilize different font types.)
- Avoid condensed or compressed fonts and italics, as they are difficult to read.
- Use both upper and lower case fonts in text; all capital sentences make text harder to read.
- Use bold to highlight a section of text. Use high-contrast colors (e.g. dark words on a white background or yellow on black background). Do not use pastel or neon colors. Use bright red sparingly. Test for color contrast and color readability by printing your work in black and white.
- Text should be left aligned with 1.25”-1.5” spacing between lines. Avoid using of hyphens to break up words at the end of lines.
- Do not place graphics of any kind behind text.
- For print materials, aim to use 1” margins.

## 7. Logos

### City of Woodburn Logo

When used in documents, City Logo should be no smaller than approximately two inches, and no larger than approximately three inches, center aligned at the top of the document.

Authorized color options are:

- a. Core City colors of blue and maroon
  - i. Color HEX codes:
    1. (Blue) #005699 
    2. (Maroon) #72113D 
- b. Black #000000
- c. White #FFFFFF
- d. Inverted
  - i. Alternate color combinations may be authorized via approval by the City Public Affairs and Communications Manager.



When used in promotional imagery, City Logo may be scaled to various sizes, and use of alternate colors to match themes are authorized. Alternate color requests shall be made to and completed by City Public Affairs and Communications Manager.

The City Logo may not be used for commercial activities, religious causes, or support for other activities that are not related to the direct conduct of City business.

Prior to sharing City Logo with outside organizations for promotional use, authorization must be approved by City Public Affairs and Communications Manager, and recipient must adhere to the following:

- City Logo shape may not be altered at any time.
- Other graphics/logos may not touch or encroach on City Logo.
- City Logo size must be equal to that of other logos.
  - Exception: City Logo may be smaller if not a primary logo. (Example: City Logo is part of a “thank you” or “contributor” section while primary organization and/or sponsor is the headline logo.)
- City Logo primary colors of blue and maroon, black, or inverted must be used unless special permissions for alternate colors are authorized by City Public Affairs and Communications Manager.

### **Woodburn Police Department Logo**

All usage rules for the City of Woodburn logo apply to usage of the Woodburn Police Badge logo. Modifications of any sort shall not be made to logo without express written permission from the Chief of Police and Public Affairs & Communications Manager.



## 8. Email Stationary Signature

Font Size Color shall be Arial 12 Black except name & surname

- 1.....Name & Surname (Arial 14 Black #000000 or Blue # #0A347E)
- 2.....Title
- 3.....Phone number | Fax (Optional)
- 4.....Website OR Department link (Hyperlink format)
- 5.....City Logo
- 6.....Street Address | City, State, Zip code
- 7.....Social Media Icon(s) (Optional)

Emails should have a white background and the stationery selector should be set to “none.”

Two signature templates will be installed by the Information Technology Department, and employees will have the ability to edit in their specific details, as well as select an option with or without the social media icons.

### Example

#### **Tommy Moore**

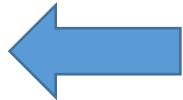
Public Affairs & Communications Manager

Ph. (503) 982-5256 | Fax. (503) 982-5243

[City Website](#) | [E-Blast Sign Up](#)



270 Montgomery St | Woodburn, OR 97071



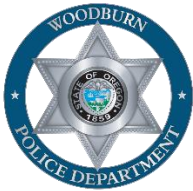
Optional social media icons

The City’s e-mail system may not be used for commercial activities, religious causes, or support for other activities that are not related to the direct conduct of city business. Employees cannot put slogans, quotes, etc. that are not related to the direct conduct of city business in their signatures.

## Police Email Stationary Signature

Font Size Color shall be Arial 12 Black except title & name

- 1.....Title & Name (Arial 14 Black #000000 or Blue #0A347E)
  - 2.....Woodburn Police Department
  - 3.....Phone number | Fax (Optional)
  - 4.....Website
  - 5.....Street Address | City, State, Zip code
  - 7.....Social Media Icon(s) (Optional if available)
- \*WPD Logo designated to the left.



### Title & Name

Woodburn Police Department

Ph. (503) 982-525

[www.woodburn-or.gov/police](http://www.woodburn-or.gov/police)

1060 Mt. Hood Ave Woodburn, OR 97071

## 9. References

Oregon Administrative Rules Chapter 166, Division 200 City general records retention schedule

City of Woodburn HR Rules

City of Woodburn Non-discrimination policy and procedures

City of Woodburn Social Media policy and procedures

City of Woodburn Information Technology Policy

City of Woodburn Accessibility Policy

## 10. Review of Policy and Procedures

This policy will be reviewed every three years or as state and federal regulations are revised and necessitate a change in the policy or procedures.

Adopted: January 2023

Appendix – Memo Templates



270 Montgomery St, Woodburn, Oregon 97071  
Phone: (503) 982-522 FAX: (503) 982-XXXX

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## Memorandum

To: Recipient Name  
From: Your Name  
Date: MM/DD/YY  
Subject:

Body of text.



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**WOODBURN POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
1060 Mt. Hood Avenue, Woodburn, Oregon 97071  
Phone: (503) 982-2345 FAX: (503) 982-2370

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## Memorandum

To: Recipient Name  
From: Your Name  
Date: MM/DD/YY  
Subject:

Body of text.



MM/DD/YYYY

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Text

SUBJECT: **Text**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**BACKGROUND:**