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Policy on the Retention of Social Media Records

Purpose: The City of New York utilizes several hundred official social media channels across more than 70 agencies. Social media posts and other content created in the course of official business are City records,¹ which may only be destroyed or disposed of pursuant to Section 1133 of the New York City Charter.

Policy: Social media records have a permanent retention and are required to be transferred to the Municipal Library for preservation and future use, with the exception of social media accounts created for investigative purposes by the New York Police Department or Department of Investigation. The City has engaged an outside vendor to automate the collection and preservation of content posted to official social media channels. Agencies are responsible for ensuring that all official social media channels are identified and provided to the Municipal Library for collection and preservation by the designated vendor.

Agencies may delete social media content when no longer needed for internal purposes as long as that content has been published through an official social media channel.

Process & Procedure: The person at each agency who manages social media shall file with the Municipal Library and the Chief Technology Officer a list of all official social media channels by January 31 annually.

Social media content from the official accounts of City offices and agencies that is harvested by a designated vendor, and metadata created or maintained by the vendor will be publicly accessible online through a link maintained by the Municipal Reference Library or its successor.

The designated vendor will ensure consistent metadata for each post, as required by the Mayor's Office of Digital Strategy MODS. At a minimum, the metadata will include the time stamp, the source data, the digital signature and at least one tag with the subject.

¹ See N.Y.C. Charter Chap. 72, § 3011(2).