

# SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY TEMPLATE



## INTERNAL POLICY

### PURPOSE

This document defines the social networking and social media policy for **[Agency's Name]**, the "Agency." To address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet and the way residents communicate and obtain information online, agency departments may consider using social media tools to reach a broader audience. The agency encourages the use of social media to further the goals of the agency and the missions of its departments, where appropriate.

### PERSONAL VS. PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES

#### Personal Use

All Agency employees may have personal social media sites. These sites should remain personal in nature and be used to share personal opinions or non-work related information. Following this principle helps ensure a distinction between sharing personal and agency views.

Agency employees must never use their agency e-mail account or password in conjunction with a social media site. The following guidance is for agency employees who decide to have a personal social media or who decide to comment on posts about official Agency business:

- State your name and, if relevant, role, when discussing agency business;
- Use a disclaimer such as: "The postings on this site are my own and don't reflect or represent the opinions of the agency for which I work."

If social media is used for official agency business, the entire agency site, regardless of any personal views, is subject to best practice guidelines and standards.

## Professional Use

All official agency-related communication through social media, should remain professional in nature and should always be conducted in accordance with the Agency's communications policy, practices and expectations. Employees must not use official agency social media for political purposes, to conduct private commercial transactions, or to engage in private business activities. Agency employees should be mindful that inappropriate use of official agency social media can be grounds for disciplinary action.

Only individuals authorized by the Agency may publish content to an agency website or agency social media account.

## POSTING

Official social media sites need to be clear, precise and follow industry best practices for posting updates. All content posted to agency social media should be:

- Relevant – Information that engages residents and pertains to their daily lives
- Timely – Pertains to deadlines, upcoming events, or current news
- Actionable – Prompts residents to take action

Please refer to the agency style guide for specific guidelines on content format.

## What Not to Post:

Agency employees may not publish content on agency social media sites that includes:

- Confidential information
- Copyrighted material without permission
- Profane, racist, sexist, threatening or derogatory content or comments
- Partisan political views
- Commercial endorsements or SPAM

## RETENTION

Social media sites are subject to **[applicable public records laws]**. Any content produced or maintained on an agency social media site, including communication posted by the agency and communication received from citizens, is a public record.

The department maintaining a site shall preserve records pursuant to the relevant records retention schedule in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily producible. Furthermore, retention of social media records shall fulfill the following requirements:

- Social media records are captured in a continuous, automated fashion throughout

the day to minimize a potential loss of data due to deletion and/or changes on the social networking site.

- Social media records are maintained in an authentic format (i.e. ideally the native technical format provided by the social network, such as XML or JSON) along with complete metadata.
- Social media records are archived in a system that preserves the context of communications, including conversation threads and rich media, to ensure completeness and availability of relevant information when records are accessed.
- Social media records are indexed based on specific criteria such as date, content type, and keywords to ensure that records can be quickly located and produced in an appropriate format for distribution (e.g. PDF).
- Each employee who administers one or more social networking sites on behalf of the Agency has self-service, read-only access to search and produce relevant social media records to fulfill public information and legal discovery requests as needed.

The Agency utilizes an automated archiving solution provided by ArchiveSocial to comply with applicable public records law and fulfill the above record retention requirements. The Agency archive is available at [www.ArchiveSocial.com](http://www.ArchiveSocial.com).

### REGISTERING A NEW PAGE

All **[Agency]** social media sites shall be (1) approved by **[contact]**, (2) published using approved social networking platform and tools, and (3) administered by the contact or their designee.

### DEREGISTERING AN EXISTING PAGE

If a social media page is no longer of use, (1) notify **[contact]**, (2) ensure records have been archived according to agency guidelines, (3) unpublish and delete page.

## EXTERNAL POLICY

### PURPOSE

To build communication and trust with our residents and visitors, and encourage participation through comments and feedback.

### GOALS

**[Agency Name]** aims to effectively use Social Media Accounts to:

- Provide information
- Support community engagement and outreach

- Support marketing and promotional campaigns
- Frame the public conversation around **[Agency]**
- Assist with recruitment efforts

Please be aware that when engaging with this agency through Social Media, you agree to the following...

## MODERATION OF THIRD PARTY CONTENT

The agency does not necessarily endorse, support, sanction, encourage, verify or agree with Third Party comments, messages, posts, opinions, advertisements, videos, promoted content, external hyperlinks, linked websites (or the information, products or services contained therein), statements, commercial products, processes or services posted on any Social Media Site.

This agency social media site serves as a limited public forum and all content published is subject to preservation and disclosure in accordance with **[State Public Record Law]**. User-generated posts may be rejected or removed when the content includes any of the following:

- incitement of violence or violent behavior,
- defamation or spread of misinformation,
- copyrighted or commercial material
- fraudulent material or accusations, or
- obscene or illegal material.

We do not allow information intended to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems. You participate at your own risk, taking personal responsibility for your comments, your username and any information provided.

## RETENTION

Social media sites contain communications sent to or received by the Agency and its employees, and such communications are therefore public records subject to **[applicable public records statute]**. These retention requirements apply regardless of the form of the record (e.g. digital text, photos, audio, and video). The Department maintaining a site shall preserve records pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule.

## EMERGENCY POSTINGS

Social media sites are not monitored 24/7. If there is an emergency, contact 911.

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## LIKE WHAT YOU SEE?

Check out our other resources on mitigating risk online and building a social media presence, as well as our library of webinars from experts in public sector and educational social media at **ArchiveSocial.com**.