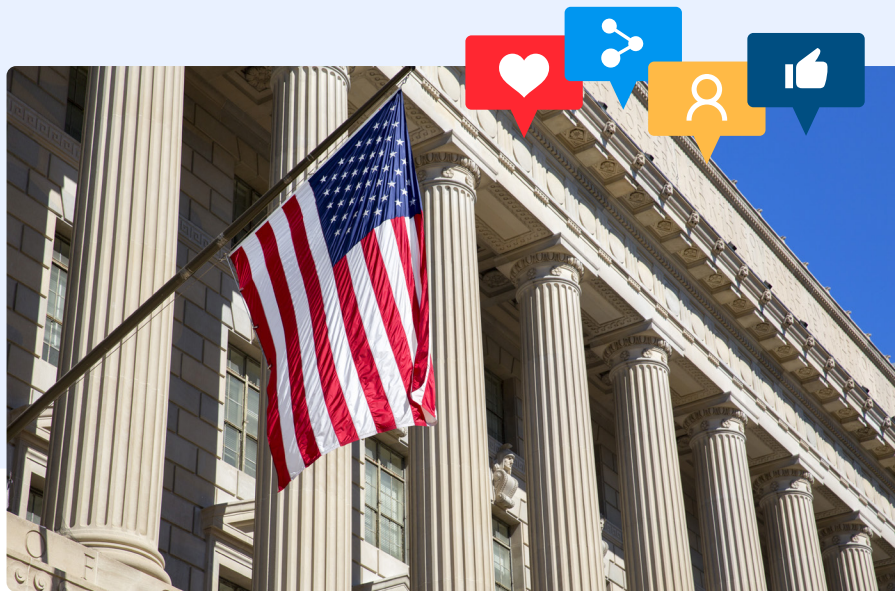


Insert Logo

Social Media For Government Agencies

Internal and external policy guidelines



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 profiles. These profiles should remain personal in nature and share personal opinions. While Agency employees may have a First Amendment right to comment on some Agency issues that are of significant public concern, employees should know that posts about Agency issues that are closer to employment complaints or human resources concerns may not be protected. Employees should be mindful of the distinction between sharing personal and agency views.

Agency employees must never use their agency e-mail account or password in conjunction with a personal social media profile. The following guidance is for agency employees who decide to have a personal social media presence 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 profile 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 profile, 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 the Agency's online platforms.

Posting

Official social media content needs to be clear, precise and follow industry best practices for posting updates. All content posted to agency social media profiles 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 formatting expectations.

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

The department maintaining a profile 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 account.

✓ 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.

✓ Each employee who administers one or more social networking profiles 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.

✓ 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 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).

✓ The Agency utilizes the CivicPlus Social Media Archiving solution to comply with applicable public records law and fulfill the above record retention requirements. The Agency archive is available at [applicable archive link], or contact your records coordinator.

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 its 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



Registering a New Page

All agency social media profiles shall be:

- (1) approved by [contact]
- (2) published using an approved social networking platform and tools
- (3) administered by the contact or their designee.

Deregistering an Existing Page

If a social media profile is no longer of use:

- (1) notify [contact]
- (2) ensure records have been archived according to agency guidelines
- (3) unpublish and delete the account

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 account. This Agency social media account 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 if the content:

- Contains obscenity
- Incites or promotes violence or illegal activities
- Contains spam or links to malware
- Promotes illegal discrimination (e.g., housing discrimination)
- Contains actual defamation
- Uses the copyrighted work of another

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

Any communications sent to or received by the Agency and its employees via social media may be subject to our retention and disclosure requirements. We are required to comply with [applicable public records statute] to ensure government is open and that the public has access to public records and information of which our agency is the custodian. These retention requirements apply regardless of the form of the record (e.g. digital text, photos, audio, and video). To that end, we automatically collect and store all information posted on this agency social media account. All information posted on this account may be subject to public disclosure under [applicable public records statute], even if it has been deleted. The department maintaining an account shall preserve records pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule.

Emergency Postings

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