

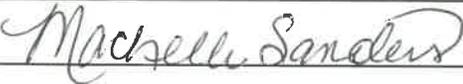
NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Social Media Policy



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION	SUBJECT: Social Media Policy	
INTERNAL POLICY		NO. GA - 8

Approved by the Secretary of Department of Administration:	Machelle Sanders
Approval Date:	
Effective Date: 11/01/19	Signature: 
Revision Date:	

Introduction

Social Media is changing the means of communication and work. It assists the Department of Administration by providing a more direct route to reach our stakeholders, promotes transparency within the Department and supplements traditional media sources by providing missing information. Social Media provides new ways of communication with citizens, co-workers, and other government agencies and officials to deliver effective and efficient services that create value to our taxpayers.

Policy Statement

This policy provides all Department of Administration employees with a clear expectation of when Social Media may be used and for what purpose it may be used. This policy provides guidance on the employee’s use of personal Social Media, the level of privacy to be expected, and the Department’s anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies.

This policy is in addition to and in accordance with the [State Human Resources Manual, Employment and Records](#) and does not supersede any State Human Resources policies.

Definitions

The following definitions apply with regards to the use Social Media:

1. Application – a web-based program or group of programs designed for interactive use to perform a basic task or function.
2. Site Content Manager – a designated individual who is responsible for overseeing the information presented on Social Media sites for a division, section, or board/commission.
3. Discrimination/Harassment – any unwelcome or unsolicited speech or conduct based on race, sex, genetic information, religion, national origin, age, color, or disabling condition that creates a hostile work environment or circumstances involving quid pro quo as defined in the Department’s Equal Employment Opportunity Plan and State Human Resources Manual.

4. Endorse or Endorsement – the act of pledging or committing support to a program, proposal, or person; public support or approval.
5. Network or Networking – interactions with individuals or groups of individuals in order to exchange information and/or develop professional or personal relationships.
6. Social Media – forms of electronic communications that allow user-generated interactions between the media creator and other users. Examples may include:
 - a. Macromedia – Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn
 - b. Video – YouTube, Snapchat, Facebook Live or Periscope
 - c. Photo Sharing – Instagram or Flickr
 - d. Messaging – Skype or Slack
 - e. Survey/Scheduling – Survey Monkey or Doodle
 - f. Blogs
 - g. Podcasts
7. Social Media Account – any account registered by a division, section or board/commission of the Department on a third-party social media site or platform.
8. Graphics Interchange Format (GIF) – an image file format commonly used for images on the web and sprites in software programs. Unlike the JPEG image format, GIFs use lossless compression that does not degrade the quality of the image.
9. Employee – any permanent, temporary, probationary, or time-limited full-time or part-time person working for the Department or any contractor providing services to the Department.
10. Work-related - Any duty or action pertaining to the business of the Department.

Social Media for Official Use

The use of Social Media to promote the Department’s mission, vision, and values is supported and encouraged, provided the division, section, or board/commission adheres to the requirements set forth herein. It is the responsibility of the division, section or board/commission to control and maintain any Social Media Account created. Failure to adhere to the requirements set forth in this policy by an Employee may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

1. Process

The division, section or board/commission shall use reasonable judgment in determining the type of Social Media platform to create. Whenever possible, a cost-benefit analysis should be performed to determine which Social Media platform would be beneficial and appropriate to support the mission, vision and values of the Department. Goals for each Social Media Account should be established prior to choosing a platform. The Department Communications Office will

assist a division, section or board/commission in choosing the most appropriate Social Media platform, if needed.

Prior to creating a Social Media Account, the Communications Office and/or the Secretary *must approve* the division, section or board/commission's Social Media platform. All Social Media Accounts must be registered with the Communications Office and the [State Archive Office](#).

All Social Media Account names must relate to the division, section or board/commission and shall be established using an official State email address. Whenever possible, Social Media Account names should be consistent across all platforms to reduce confusion and improve search optimization. All Social Media Accounts names should include the term "NC" to denote a State account. Exceptions may be made for accounts established prior to the execution of this policy.

Profile images shall include the Department logo, and header images shall be watermarked with or contain the name of the Department in the corner. All Social Media Accounts must state that it is an official account of the Department and that all content and communications is subject to the [N.C. Public Records Act](#) (N.C. Gen. Stat. Chapter 132).

Each division, section or board/commission shall designate at least one Site Content Manager to monitor, manage and police all activity on the Social Media site. The division, section or board/commission shall provide accurate contact information for their Site Content Manager along with all usernames and passwords for each Social Media Account to the Communications Office. The Communications Office shall be notified within 24 hours of any changes to this information.

2. Cybersecurity

In order to maintain security and minimize risks to the Social Media Accounts and Department equipment passwords for Social Media Accounts should be comprised of a phrase or sentence that contains at least 12 characters (or as required by the Social Media platform). Passwords must not be a Site Content Manager's current or past NCID password and each Social Media Account should have a different and unique password.

When available, enable two-step verification for increased security.

Social Media usernames and passwords shall always be maintained on file with the Communications Office. It is the responsibility of the Site Content Manager to notify the Communications Office of any changes to ensure this information is up to date.

3. Usage/Conduct

Any Social Media followed by a Social Media Account should be relevant to the mission of the Department and must be neutral and non-partisan. A Social Media Account must not follow political campaign accounts. A Social Media Account shall not follow current or potential vendors.

A division, section or board/commission must carefully consider any content and replies posted as such content will be perceived as an official Department or State of North Carolina position, comment, or statement. A division, section or board/commission should seek guidance and/or permission to post or share content that may be sensitive, third-party related, or politically divisive.

Copyright and trademark laws must be followed when referencing another party's work and a citation or link to the original work must be provided.

Photos/Images should be used with care to ensure that proper credit is given to the creator or source and that there are photo releases in instances when children are in the photo. Take notice of the entire photo and be aware of what information can be seen the background of photos.

GIFS should rarely, if ever, be used. Approval from the Communications Office is needed prior to using to avoid infecting accounts and/or computer systems with malicious software or malware.

Infographics/Graphics should be clearly branded or marked with the Department or division, section or board/commission logo and follow the guidelines outlined in the NC Digital Commons Web Standards and Guidelines.

Spam, advertising or links thereto should be flagged, reported and/or removed from a division, section or board/commission Social Media Account.

Content should be reviewed prior to posting to ensure facts are accurate, free of spelling and grammar errors, and that any account tagged or mentioned belongs to the correct person or organization. All content should be reviewed by the Site Content Manager, or when unavailable, the Communications Office. When posting content from mobile devices, ensure the posting is to the correct Social Media Account. Any personal Social Media content inadvertently posted to a Social Media Account should be removed immediately.

Content will not be removed that expresses different or disagreeing viewpoints with the Department. Content may be removed if it is obscene, threatening, discriminatory or harassing. A Social Media Account should avoid content that would not be acceptable in the workplace and refrain from addressing employee disputes.

The Communications Office reserves the right to remove content from a division, section or board/commission's Social Media Account that contains any of the following:

- a. Inappropriate or offensive content;
- b. Hate speech or ethnic slurs;
- c. Discriminatory statements;
- d. Nudity;
- e. Profanity, Obscenity, or Vulgarity;

- f. Defamation toward any person or people;
- g. Harassing, cyber bullying, stalking, name calling and/or personal attacks;
- h. Comments that infringe on copyrights; or
- i. Protected, confidential or personally identifiable information.

Transparency should always be maintained. If a post needs to be altered, a notation should be made. Mistakes should be corrected immediately.

A Social Media Account may be used to respond to any misrepresentations in the media only when the facts are accurate and correct. All media inquiries should be routed to the Communications Office. A Social Media Account should not be used to debate a media topic or opinion.

Social Media content must not be used to endorse goods or services from private vendors or potential vendors and must not be used for personal gain.

4. Monitoring

Site Content Managers should regularly monitor each Social Media Account for comments, replies, tagging from other accounts, social media trolls, and trending topics. If a Social Media Account has been compromised, hacked or tampered with in any manner, the Site Content Manager should take all action to recover the Social Media Account and immediately change the account password and/or remove any content that may have been added as a result of the compromise, hack or tampered incident. Immediately notify the Communications Office of any incident, resulting steps taken and new password information.

Audits of Social Media Accounts should be performed on a regular basis (monthly/quarterly). This includes monitoring followers for fake accounts and bots and running an analysis for followers, engagement and click-through metrics.

5. Public Records/Records Retention

Social Media Accounts are subject to the [NC Public Records Act](#) (N.C. Gen. Stat. Chapter 132) and shall be maintained in accordance with the division, section or board/commission's Record Retention Schedule. Materials on an official Social Media Account will be archived in accordance with the NC Records Retention Schedule regardless of who created the material. All requests for public records received through a Social Media Account shall be routed to the Communications Office.

Social Media for Personal Use

The Department recognizes that Employees may use Social Media on a personal basis outside of their professional duties. Incidental personal use during work hours, when such use is outside the Employee's official job function and which does not interfere with the Employee's work responsibilities, is permitted.

Excessive personal use of Social Media by Employees during work hours is prohibited and could result in disciplinary action.

Employees must be mindful of the potential to blur their personal and professional lives through Social Media. An Employee's profile information in which they identify their State Employee status should accurately reflect their position or status with the Department and all effort should be made to keep this information current and up to date. Any deliberate or purposeful misrepresentation of a State Employee's title and/or job duties in their profile information could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Personal use of Social Media that may relate to subject matter pertinent to their employment must be conducted in such a manner that it does not create the impression the Employee is representing the State of North Carolina or any agency or department of the State. The Employee shall include a clear disclaimer indicating that the Employee's content does not represent the State nor are they communicating on behalf of any agency or department of the State.

Employees should use good judgment when posting to a personal Social Media account, especially if the Employee refers to anything related to the Department operations. Even when acting in the personal setting, Employees must remember that they may be perceived as representing the Department or the State of North Carolina when discussing such matters.

Content on personal Social Media Accounts when related to the workplace or co-workers may be subject to the Department's Harassment and Discrimination Policy. Any content that falls in the definition of inappropriate behavior may lead to the Employee receiving disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employees shall not create a Social Media Account using a State email address, nor may they use identifying profile images or avatars that contain the State or Department seal or logo. Personal Social Media Accounts must be distinct from any Department, division, section, or board/commission Social Media Account.

Employees shall refrain from disclosing Restricted, Highly Restricted, Copyright, Trade Secret, or Proprietary State of North Carolina information. The disclosure of this information may result in legal or disciplinary action.

Any content posted to a personal Social Media Account from a Department computer or mobile device may be subject to the NC Public Records Act. (N.C. Gen. Stat. Chapter 132).

References:

Business Leadership Symposium: Drafting and Implementing an Effective Social Media Policy, 18 Tex.

Wesleyan L. Rev. 767, Hudson, Susan C. and Roberts, Karla K, Summer, 2012.

N.C. Gen. Stat. Chapter 132. (NC Public Records Act.)

https://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/HTML/ByChapter/Chapter_132.html

NC Department of Administration, *Equal Employment Opportunity Plan*. March 1, 2019.

<https://files.nc.gov/ncdoa/hrm/eeo/Equal-Opportunity-Plan-2019.pdf>

NC Department of Administration, Policies and Procedures, *Acceptable Technology Use Policy*. February 5, 2017.

NC Office of the Governor, NC Office of Information Technology Service, NC Department of Cultural Resources, *Best Practices for State Agency Social Media Usage in North Carolina*, Version 2.0, March 2012.

NC Office of State Human Resources, *State Personnel Manual*. <https://oshr.nc.gov/policies-forms/employment-records>.

NC State Government Web Site Archives & Access Program, *About the Web Site Archives and Access Program*. <http://webarchives.ncdcr.gov/>

NC State Government Web Site Archives & Access Program, *Copyright Notice*.

<http://webarchives.ncdcr.gov/copyright.html>

State Archives of North Carolina. *Digital Records Policies and Guidelines*.

<https://archives.ncdcr.gov/government/digital-records>

State of North Carolina Department of Public Safety, Policy Requirement & Procedure, *Social Media*, August 13, 2013.

For questions, comments, or to report abuse, send a message to communications@doa.nc.gov.