

ORANGE COUNTY SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

I. PURPOSE

Orange County has recognized the need to augment traditional communication methods with the use of social media channels. Public demand and the rapid growth of social media (aka: Web 2.0) use by other local, state and federal government entities has highlighted the usefulness of social media as an effective mode of enhancing constituent communications. The use of social media presents opportunity and risk to individual County agencies and departments, as well as the County as a whole. In general, the County supports the use of social media technology to enhance communication, collaboration and information exchange to meet business mission and goals.

This document establishes the countywide social media use policies, protocols and procedures intended to mitigate associated risks from use of this technology where possible. This policy will be revised and Department social media activity shall be adjusted accordingly, in the event the County changes its direction on social media use.

II. DEFINITION

- A. Social Media Network(s) / Site(s) – An online service or site that focuses on building social networks or social relations among people, and permits users of the site to share information, interact and communicate with each other.
- B. Approved Social Media Site(s) – An online service or site sponsored by the County permitting information exchange, interaction and communication between the public and the County, its Agencies and/or Departments and listed on the Social Media Policy Site Guide.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all Orange County employees and volunteers, interns, consultants, service providers and contractors performing business on behalf of County Agencies/ Departments.

Departments using social media technology shall achieve policy compliance within 30 days of the approval of this policy by the County Manager.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

The County Manager, or his designee, is responsible for facilitating the County's Social Media Policy in compliance with established Board rules and protocols.

This includes the responsibility to audit Department use of social media and enforce policy compliance. Within the terms of this policy, Department Heads have authority to determine and establish social media activity at the Department program level.

V. POLICY

- A. Department use of social media technology shall conform to the policies, protocols and procedures contained, or referenced, herein.
- B. A Department's decision to embrace social media shall be a risk-based business decision approved by the Department Head and supported by a strong business case that considers the Department's mission and goals, audience, legal risks, technical capabilities and potential benefits.
- C. A Department's decision to use social media technology shall be documented in writing and approved by the Department Head, County Attorney, Chief Information Officer and the County Manager.
- D. Access to social media networks from within the County's IT infrastructure is limited to individuals performing official County business and to agencies/departments with sufficient information and technology security controls.
- E. Department Heads are ultimately responsible for determining who is authorized to use social media on behalf of the department, and for designating appropriate access levels, while maintaining ultimate account ownership.
- F. Departments shall only utilize County approved social media networks for hosting official County social media sites.
- G. County Department social media sites shall be created and maintained in accordance with County social network usage standards and with identifiable characteristics of an official County site.
- H. Departments are responsible for establishing, maintaining and monitoring the activity on the social media sites, and shall follow the measures outlined herein to prevent inappropriate or technically harmful information and links.
- I. The same standards, principles and guidelines that apply to Orange County employees in the performance of their assigned duties apply to social media technology use on behalf of the County.
- J. Department use of social media shall be documented and maintained in an easily accessible format that tracks account information and preserves items that may be considered a record subject to disclosure under the North Carolina's Public Records Act.
- K. Department social media sites shall be monitored regularly and prompt corrective action shall be taken when an issue arises that places, or has potential to place, the County at risk.

VI. PROCEDURES

A. Authorized Use of Social Media

- 1) Departments utilizing social media shall:
 - (a) Have a strong understanding of the risks associated with using social media.
 - (b) Prior to opening an account, consult with the Chief Information Officer and County Attorney to assess the risks utilizing a specific County approved social networking site in comparison with the business opportunities expected.
 - (c) Establish and document a well thought out and documented social media strategy.
 - (d) Implement the security controls mandated by the Chief Information Officer to protect County Information and Technology assets.
 - (e) Only access social media networks authorized by the Chief Information Officer.
 - (f) Comply with all applicable federal, state, and county laws, regulations and policies including, but may not be limited to, copyright, records retention, North Carolina Public Records Act, First Amendment, privacy laws, employment related laws and County policies.
- 2) Department Heads shall designate at least two employees (one primarily authorized user and secondary authorized user) to monitor the Department's social media sites with specified access levels.
- 3) Departments shall determine the appropriate access levels which include identifying what sites, or type of sites, the individual is approved to use, as well as defining capability: publish, edit, comment or view only.
- 4) Only the Department Head and designated employees shall have permission to create, publish or comment on behalf of a County Department.
- 5) Only the Department Head associated with a particular Social Media Site and the County Manager shall have the authority to increase or decrease the access levels to the social media sites.
- 6) The ability to change account credentials shall be the responsibility of the Department Head and not delegated within a Department.
- 7) Employees authorized to monitor content on social media sites shall comply with the guidelines provided in Section D – Site Content.
- 8) Authorized users shall be provided a copy of the County's social media policy and are required to acknowledge their understanding and acceptance of this Policy.

B. Approved Social Media Networks

- 1) Departments shall utilize only approved social media networks for hosting official County social media sites.
- 2) County social media sites shall be used only to provide information about County Departments or County related events or programs.
- 3) Social media networks under consideration will be reviewed and approved by the Chief Information Officer in with consultation from County Attorney, HR and Risk Management when appropriate.
- 4) For each approved social media network, usage standards will be developed and documented by Information Technologies to optimize government use of the site in correlation with the County's overall business mission and County Social Media Use Policy.
- 5) Chief Information Officer is responsible for maintaining the list of approved social media networks and site related usage standards.
- 6) Social media networks on the approved list shall be reviewed at least bi-annually for changes to terms of use agreements and/or new/expired offerings or as needed.
- 7) A Department may request review and approval of additional social media networks as needed.

C. Official County Social Media Sites

- 1) County Department social media sites shall be created and maintained in accordance with County social network usage standards and with identifiable characteristics of an official County site.
- 2) County social media network accounts shall be created and maintained using an official County email account, solely owned by the respective Department Head.
- 3) Sites shall contain visible elements that identify them as an official Orange County, North Carolina site. Among other items, this includes displaying official County seals, Department brands, contact information and a link to Department websites.
- 4) County social media sites shall display, or provide a link to, the County's Content Disclaimer and Social Media Disclaimer and any applicable policies.

D. Site Content

- 1) Departments are responsible for establishing, monitoring and maintaining content posted to their social media sites and shall have measures in effect to prevent inappropriate or technically harmful information and links.
- 2) As is the case for Orange County web sites, agencies/departments are responsible for the content and upkeep of their social media sites.
- 3) County websites shall remain the primary and predominant source for Internet information.
- 4) Content available through an online source **shall**:
 - (a) Be deemed of value, useful and appropriate for the general public;
 - (b) Shall use proper grammar and standard AP style whenever possible, avoiding the use of jargon and acronyms that may not be widely understood by the public;
 - (c) Be factual and properly vetted;
 - (d) Be approved by the Department Head, when deemed potentially provocative.
 - (e) County content available through an online source **shall not** contain, or hyperlink (*link*) to, information that:
 - (i) Threatens, condescends, or degrades any group belonging to a particular race, culture, religion, sex, sexual orientation or political party;
 - (ii) Is profane, vulgar, obscene, or sexually explicit;
 - (iii) Promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regards to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
 - (iv) Can be classified as confidential, private or proprietary, or can be classified as personal health information under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA);
 - (v) May infringe on a third party's copyright or intellectual property rights;
 - (vi) Contains a solicitation of commerce;
 - (vii) Contains paid advertisements or endorsements, with the exception of a County contracted business lessee;
 - (viii) Contains plagiarized material;
 - (ix) May be illegal or encourages illegal activity;
 - (x) May compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
 - (xi) Discloses confidential or proprietary information.

E. Comments

- 1) Sharing or posting content owned by others shall be performed in accordance with copyright, fair use and established laws pertaining to materials owned by others. This includes, but is not limited to, quotes, images, documents, links, etc.
- 2) Electronic information posted to a social media site by the County, or a member of the public, may be considered a record subject to North Carolina's Public Record Act.
- 3) Social media sites are not intended to be used in a manner that guarantees the right to protected free speech. Each Department is responsible for monitoring postings, and taking appropriate action when necessary, to protect general site visitors from inappropriate or technically harmful information and links.
- 4) Sites that allow public comment shall inform visitors of the intended purpose of the site and provide a clear statement of the discussion topic introduced for public comment so that the public is aware of the limited nature of the discussion and that inappropriate posts are subject to removal, including but not limited to the following types of postings regardless of format (text, video, images, links, documents, etc.):
 - (a) Comments not topically related;
 - (b) Profane language or content;
 - (c) Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regards to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
 - (d) Sexual content or links to sexual content;
 - (e) Solicitations of commerce;
 - (f) Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
 - (g) Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
 - (h) Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.
- 5) Department's choosing to establish a blog or allow posts from the public on County social network sites, shall prominently display, or provide a link to, the County's Social Media Disclaimer and Comment Policy.
- 6) Departments choosing to use public comments shall consult with County Attorney to develop and document Department-specific disclaimers to meet the County's legal needs. County Attorney may also be consulted to determine whether to remove comments that violate this policy
- 7) Authorized employees shall respond to all comments not topically related, but concerning the performance of the Orange County Government as follows:

“Thank you for participating in this discussion and for your feedback on the performance of the Orange County Government. Your comment has been forward to the appropriate authorities for further action. If you need additional information please contact the Office of the Orange County Clerk at (919) 245-2130”.

F. User Behavior

- 1) The same standards, principles and guidelines that apply to Orange County employees in the performance of their assigned duties apply to employee social media technology use.
- 2) County workforce members authorized to use social media technology shall do so only within the scope defined by their respective Department and in compliance with all County policies and practices.
- 3) Social media use by County workforce members shall be performed within the County’s established Social Media Policy.
- 4) Authorized social network spokespersons participating in personal social networking discussions related to County business matters shall indicate that viewpoints are personal and may not reflect County opinion.
- 5) Employees performing County social media work beyond normal work hours shall receive pre-authorization from the Department.
- 6) Employees shall obey all laws and shall refrain from engaging in partisan political activity when using social media sites on behalf of the County.
- 7) All questions concerning implementation of the Social Media Policy shall be directed to the County Attorney.

G. Account Deactivation

IT reserves the right to monitor and terminate any underutilized social media accounts.

H. Records Management

- 1) Department use of social media shall be documented and maintained in an easily accessible format that tracks account information and preserves items that may be considered a record subject to disclosure under the North Carolina’s Public Records Act or required to be retained pursuant the records retention laws.
- 2) Departments are responsible for the creation, administration and deactivation of social media accounts.

- 3) Only the Department Head associated with a particular social media site shall have the credentials to control the email access account for the site or social media account. Account password information shall only be shared with authorized staff designated by the Department Head, or her/his designee, to fulfill the role of Site Account Administrator.
- 4) Passwords shall conform to County complex password requirements when permissible.
- 5) Account password shall promptly be reset when an employee is removed as an account administrator.
- 6) Departments shall maintain a record of social media sites created for County use, including, but may not be limited to:
 - (a) A log file containing the name of the social media network, account id, password, registered email address, date established, authorizing representative and name of person who created account and agreed to the sites terms of use agreement and/or policy.
 - (b) A record of the sites usage agreement at the time the site was created and any updated versions.
 - (c) A list of authorized site content authors and editors.
 - (d) Electronic information posted to a social media site by the County, or a member of the public if permitted, may be considered a record subject to North Carolina Public Records Act.
- 7) Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to County business, including a list of subscribers and County or public posted communication, may be a public record.
- 8) IT shall have procedures in effect to preserve published social media content.
- 9) The Department maintaining the site is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any public records request for public records on social media.
- 10) Site content shall be maintained in accordance with its respective Records Retention Schedule and in accordance with County IT policies and procedures. If the content constitutes a public record, it must be disclosed to the public unless an exemption applies.

- 11) Posts deemed technically harmful or inappropriate shall be promptly documented, saved prior to removal from the site.
- 12) Departments shall maintain a record of signed social media policy acknowledgement forms for each authorized user.