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| <b>COUNTY OF SHASTA</b>      |                        | Number           |
| <b>ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL</b> |                        | 4-301            |
| SECTION:                     | Information Technology | Social Media Use |
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**PURPOSE**

The County of Shasta has a business need to augment traditional communication methods with the use of social media channels. The use of social media presents opportunity and risk to the County and individual County departments. In general, the County endorses the secure use of social media technology to enhance communication and information exchange to further County and department missions and goals.

**APPLICABILITY**

This policy applies to all County of Shasta employees and approved volunteers, consultants, service providers and contractors performing business on behalf of a department.

Section 4 of this Policy also applies to members of the public that post on County social media sites.

**POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**Section 1. County Social Media Technology Use**

A. Definitions:

1. “Social media” means content created by individuals, using accessible, expandable, and upgradable publishing technologies, through and on the internet. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, RSS, YouTube, LinkedIn, Delicious, and Flickr.
2. “Posts” or “postings” mean information, articles, pictures, videos, or any other form of content published on a County social media site. These terms also include comments or the use of digital icons that express reactions to communications made.
3. “County social media sites” means social media sites which the County establishes and maintains, and over which it has control over all postings, except for advertisements or hyperlinks by the social media site’s owners, vendors, or partners.

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B. Compliance with laws generally:

1. In addition to all County policies and procedures, County departments shall use social media technology only as governed by this policy.
2. The department’s use of Social Media shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and county laws, regulations, and policies including, but not limited to, copyright, records retention, California Public Records Act (“PRA”) (Government Code §§6250 et seq.), First Amendment, privacy laws, employment-related laws, and County-established policies.

C. The County’s official website at [www.co.shasta.ca.us](http://www.co.shasta.ca.us) (or any domain owned by the County) will remain the County’s primary means of internet communication.

1. County social media usage shall support the information found on County department websites.
2. County social media sites shall supplement, and not replace, the County’s required notices and standard methods of communication.

D. Content posted to social media sites shall contain links directing users back to the primary County websites for in-depth information, forms, related documents, or on-line services designed to facilitate business with the County.

E. The Department of Information Technology will maintain a list of approved social media sites which may be reviewed and amended from time to time.

**Section 2. Department Management Requirements**

A. The department’s decision to use social media shall be a risk-based business decision. In conducting an assessment of when to use social media, the department head shall be able to articulate a strong business case that considers:

1. The need for the department to communicate to the public efficiently, often, and effectively.
2. The department’s mission and goals;
3. The reputational risks and benefits to the County;
4. The technical requirements and impacts on County systems;

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5. Employee productivity;
  6. Cost to implement, maintain, and monitor the social media; and
  7. The potential for misuse of the social media either by the public or employees through the exposure or leakage of sensitive or protected information.
- B. The department head must receive approval from the County Executive Officer (CEO) or his or her designee(s) prior to using social media. The department head will submit to the CEO a summary of the business case which includes the items described in Section 2.A. of this Policy.
  - C. Each department may only utilize established social media sites and formats which appear on the County's list of approved social media sites as stated in Section 1(E) of this Policy.
  - D. Each department must comply with the County's contracts policies and procedures before accepting any site's terms and conditions of use.
  - E. Any County social media site (which includes any website funded and/or managed by the County or a county collaborative effort) must comply with this Policy.
  - F. Each department shall maintain a list of all social media sites utilized by the department. The list should include the date of the site was established and, if applicable, the date the site was terminated.
  - G. The department head, or his or her designee, is responsible for monitoring on a regular basis each of the social media sites maintained by their department for compliance with this Policy.
  - H. Should a social media site be out of compliance with this Policy, the department head shall take immediate steps to correct the non-compliance or shut down the social media site. Any incidents of non-compliance shall be reported to the CEO.
  - I. Department heads are responsible for determining who is authorized to use social media on behalf of the Department, and for designating appropriate access levels.
  - J. Department heads shall provide authorized users a copy of this Policy and have the user sign a copy of the current policy to acknowledge his or her understanding and acceptance via wet signature or e-signature. The copy shall be kept in the user's personnel file with the department.

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K. The department head, or his or her designee, is responsible for the creation, administration, and deactivation of social media accounts.

**Section 3. Technical and Content Requirements**

- A. If there is a government option available through the social media host, the department shall choose this option when setting up the social media site.
- B. Each site shall conform to the following requirements:
1. Be identified as sponsored by the County.
  2. Contain a link to the County’s Legal Disclaimer (found at [www.co.shasta.ca.us](http://www.co.shasta.ca.us)).
  3. Contain contact information for the County program.
  4. Comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
  5. Comply with section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794d), Subpart B, 1194.22.
  6. Conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines found at [www.w3.org](http://www.w3.org).
  7. Comply with all applicable federal, state, and county laws, regulations, and policies including, but not limited to, copyright, records retention, California Public Records Act (PRA), First Amendment, privacy laws, employment-related laws, and County- established policies.
  8. Will not contain postings in support of, or opposition to, political campaigns, candidates, or ballot measures.
  9. Will not contain information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
  10. Will not contain content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

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- C. Because proper representation of the County is important in the use of social media, employees shall follow the following guidelines in developing, maintaining, and monitoring social media and county websites:
1. All County social media sites shall utilize authorized County contact information for account set-up, monitoring and access. The use of personal email accounts or phone numbers by any County employee is not allowed for the purpose of setting-up, monitoring, or accessing a County social media site.
  2. All employees posting information to a social media site in their role with the County of Shasta and as part of their designated job responsibilities shall identify themselves in an appropriate manner as a County representative.
  3. Employees will not disclose confidential or proprietary information.
  4. Employees shall post or publish correction of errors or inaccurate information within 24 hours of notification or discovery of incorrect or inaccurate information and shall report errors or violations of this Policy to the department head immediately.
  5. Employees shall ensure that the County has full permission or rights to any content posted by the County, including for example logo's, brandnames, photographs, and videos.

**Section 4. Social Media Comments Policy**

- A. The purpose of Shasta County's official social media platforms is to provide information of public interest to the county's residents, business community, visitors and other members of the general public. The County allows persons to engage their local government through social media by submitting comments and questions regarding the posted topics and by sharing the county's information with others. Shasta County's Social Media Comments Policy provides people who choose to communicate with the county via its official social media platforms with guidelines for engagement. Shasta County assumes no liability for any inaccuracies County social media sites may contain and does not guarantee that County social media sites will be uninterrupted, permanent, or error-free.
- B. The posts expressed on the County social media sites by members of the public do not reflect the opinions and position of Shasta County government or its officers and employees.

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C. Communications made through County social media sites in no way constitute a legal or official notice or comment to the County of Shasta (for example, a post or comment that asks for public records will not be considered a public records request). To make official comments about a specific County project or program, persons are to contact the appropriate department.

D. Privacy Policy and Disclaimer

1. Any individual accessing, browsing and using a County Social Media site accepts without limitation or qualification, the County’s Social Media Comments Policy. These terms and conditions apply only to the County social media sites. The County of Shasta maintains the right to modify the County’s Social Media Comments Policy without notice. Any modification is effective immediately upon posting the modification on the Shasta County Social Media Comments Policy page unless otherwise stated. Continued use of a County social media site following the posting of any modification signifies acceptance of such modification.
2. All users of a County Social Media site are also subject to the site's own Privacy Policy. The County of Shasta has no control over a third party site's privacy policy or their modifications to it. The County of Shasta also has no control over content, commercial advertisements or other postings produced by the Social Media site that appear on County Social Media sites as part of the site's environment.
3. Users should be aware that all content on County social media sites may be subject to disclosure, inspection, or copying under the Public Records Act, unless an exemption in law exists.

E. Comment Removal

1. Shasta County considers its social media sites to be moderated online discussion sites. As a result, the county reserves the right to remove posts that contain:
  - a. Illegal Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity
  - b. Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination or harassment against protected classes
  - c. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party, such as copyright or trademark infringement
  - d. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.

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- e. Profane language or content
  - f. Political statements, including comments that endorse or oppose political candidates or ballot propositions
  - g. Obscene or Sexual content
  - h. Solicitations of commerce or advertisements promoting products or services
  - i. Spam or comments that include links to external online sites
  - j. Content that is clearly unrelated to the posted topics
  - k. Confidential or non-public information
2. Violators of this policy may have their posts removed from the county social media sites. Continued or egregious violations of this policy may prompt the county to further restrict an individual’s commenting on county social media sites. All posts and comments to County Social Media sites will be regularly reviewed. Staff will endeavor to be consistent in their treatment of comment material and will not discriminate based on a user’s viewpoint. Staff should consult with County Counsel prior to removing posts or imposing restrictions under this section.
3. Shasta County further reserves the right to establish social media sites that limit the ability to post only to County employees or County affiliates and to not permit public comment.

**F. Links and Embedded Content**

- 1. The County of Shasta may select links to other Social Media sites and outside websites that offer helpful resources for users as provided in the County’s Hypertext Links Use Policy. Once an individual links to another page or site, the County’s policies no longer apply and a person become subject to the policies of that page or site.
- 2. The County ‘s Social Media sites are intended specifically to share information about County programs, events and services and to promote the social and economic welfare of Shasta County. The County of Shasta is not responsible for the content that appears on these outside links and provides these links as a convenience only. Users should be aware that these external pages and sites and the information found on those pages and sites are not controlled by, provided by or endorsed by the County of Shasta. The County reserves

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the right to delete links posted by outside individuals that violate the County’s Social Media Comments Policy at any time without notice.

3. It is not necessary to get advance permission to link to County Social Media sites; however, entities and individuals linking to County Social Media sites should not in any way suggest that the County of Shasta has any relationship or affiliation with that organization or that the County endorses, sponsors or recommends the information, products or services of that site.
4. It is not necessary to get advance permission to embed County Social Media site content; however, entities and individuals embedding content must not present County of Shasta content as their own or otherwise misrepresent any of the County’s Social Media site content. Furthermore, they shall not misinform users about the origin or ownership of County Social Media site content. Embedded content from County Social Media sites should not in any way suggest that the County of Shasta has any relationship or affiliation with that organization or that the County endorses, sponsors or recommends the information, products or services of that site.

G. Copyright Policy

1. All information and materials generated by the County of Shasta and provided on County Social Media sites are the property of the County of Shasta. The County retains copyright on all text, graphic images and other content that was produced by the County of Shasta and found on the page. Persons may print copies of information and material for their own non-commercial use, provided that they retain the copyright symbol or other such proprietary notice intact on any copyrighted materials they copy. A credit line shall be included reading: "credit: County of Shasta Facebook (or Twitter or YouTube) Page" or "Courtesy of County of Shasta."
2. Commercial use of text, County logos, photos and other graphics is prohibited without the express written permission of the County of Shasta. Use of the County logo is prohibited for any non-governmental purpose. Any person reproducing or redistributing a third party copyright must adhere to the terms and conditions of the third party copyright holder. If a person is a copyright holder and believes that the County of Shasta did not use an appropriate credit line, the person is to notify the County Executive Officer with detailed information about the circumstances, so that the copyright information can be added or the material in question can be removed.



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H. Posting of the County Social Media Comments Policy

1. The County’s Social Media Comments Policy shall be posted prominently on the County’s main webpage.
2. All County social media sites that permit public comment shall prominently display a link to the County Social Media Comments Policy, and a link to the County’s Legal Disclaimer (found at [www.co.shasta.ca.us](http://www.co.shasta.ca.us)), and to the extent space is available, also include the following language.

Comment Policy:

The County of Shasta welcomes your comments. The purpose of this discussion is to present information relevant to the stated purpose of this site, regarding matters of public interest in the County of Shasta. We encourage you to submit your comments, but please note this is a moderated online discussion site.

Please note that the comments expressed on this site do not necessarily reflect the opinions or positions of the County its officers, agents, affiliates, or employees. If you have any questions concerning the operation of this online moderated discussion site, please contact us at [scinfo@co.shasta.ca.us](mailto:scinfo@co.shasta.ca.us).

By posting anything to this site, you agree to follow the published guidelines as outlined in the County’s Social Media Comments Policy found here.

If you have any questions or concerns about the County’s Social Media Comments Policy or its implementation, please contact [scinfo@co.shasta.ca.us](mailto:scinfo@co.shasta.ca.us).

**RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENTS**

Information Technology  
County Counsel  
County Administrative Office

**REFERENCES**

BOS Policy Resolution No. 2020-03--12/15/20 (Revised)  
BOS Policy Resolution No. 2012-08--12/11/12