
Office of the Secretary of State Policy

SOCIAL MEDIA

Policy Adopted: 3/15/2018

Authorizing Signature:



SUBJECT: Policy – Social Media

1. SCOPE: Social media technology can serve as a powerful tool for the Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS), to enhance communication and education with other government agencies and the public, and can be globally communicated almost instantly. This technology also provides interactivity, transparency and collaboration between the Office of the Secretary of State and the public. The use of social media platforms is encouraged as a way to promote the mission and goals of the OSOS, its divisions and programs.
2. AUTHORITY:
 - A. [WAC 292-110-010](#) Use of State Resources Rule
 - B. [RCW 42.52](#) Ethics in Public Services Act
 - C. [OSOS Network Policy](#)
 - D. [OSOS Use of State Resources Policy](#)
3. APPLICABILITY: This policy applies to all employees, interns, and volunteers of the Office of the Secretary of State.
4. PURPOSE: This policy establishes clear guidelines to ensure proper and consistent use of social media accounts representing the Office of the Secretary of State, its divisions and programs and the use of personal social media accounts by OSOS employees.
5. DEFINITIONS:
 - A. Social Media. For the purposes of this policy, is any electronic communication done using online content sharing sites including social networking, blogging, and media sharing sites.
 - B. Social Media Platform. Examples for social media platforms in this policy include but are not limited to: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, WordPress, Reddit,

Tumblr, MailChimp, Constant Contact, Giphy, Bit.ly, any similar sites and any future sites that perform similar functions.

C. Cyber misconduct. Cyberstalking, cyberbullying or online harassment. Use of electronic communications including, but not limited to, electronic mail, instant messaging, electronic bulletin boards, and social media sites, to harass, abuse, bully or engage in other conduct which harms, threatens, or is reasonably perceived as threatening the health or safety of another person.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. Employee. Reads and complies with this policy
- B. Employee. Reads the OSOS Diversity Policy and OSOS Harassment Awareness Prevention Policy, and ensures postings are consistent with these policies. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject you to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- C. Communications Director. Approves or denies requests for social media accounts and maintains records of all OSOS approved accounts.
- D. Supervisor. Monitors and ensures compliance with this policy. Approves or denies requests for social media representatives and prohibits retribution or retaliation against any employee who reports or supplies information about any violation of this policy.

7. GENERAL:

- A. OSOS Sponsored Social Media Accounts
 - 1. Division directors must request written approval from the OSOS Communications Director to create new official OSOS social media accounts. Employees must request advance written approval from their division directors designating them as authorized representatives to post to official OSOS social media accounts. Requests may be submitted and approved/denied by email.
 - 2. Division directors may determine posting procedures for their division accounts.
 - 3. When using OSOS approved social media accounts, employees must:
 - a. Always use discretion when using social media platforms.
 - b. Clearly state their affiliation with OSOS and their role as a social media representative for the Office.
 - c. Conduct themselves in a respectful and professional manner at all times and never engage in any form of cyber misconduct.
 - d. Not share confidential, proprietary, and/or legally sensitive information about themselves, other employees or volunteers, or OSOS.
 - 4. Employees are prohibited from:

- a. The use of profane or offensive language or media with profane or offensive language. This includes gifs, memes, photographs, video, and audio files.
 - b. Posting content that promotes discrimination based on (but is not limited to) race, creed, class, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or religion.
 - c. Posting anything that will endanger public safety or compromise it in any way.
 - d. Posting personal opinions as views or policies of the OSOS.
 - e. Posting intentionally misleading information.
5. Social media is considered public record and original records must be preserved per the State General Retention Schedule and the Secretary of State Records Retention Schedule. The following social media information is considered public record and must be retained:
- a. Content dealing with the official conduct of state business including, items of legal significance such as litigation, items of fiscal significance such as contracts, and, items dealing with policy.
 - b. Constituent correspondence including comments or messages and user-submitted photos.
6. Authorized representatives may delete posts that have been accidentally posted, as long as there are no comments. Posts with comments are considered public record and have to be archived properly. Deleted posts will be gone from the main profile, but they will be stored for public record purposes. Representatives may also delete a post at the direction of the Secretary of State, the Deputy or Assistant Secretary, the representative's division director, or the OSOS Communications Director.
7. Employees that do not receive written permission from the Communications Director are not authorized to establish OSOS sponsored social media accounts. Employees that do not receive written permission from their division director are not authorized to post or maintain OSOS sponsored social media accounts.
8. OSOS has the responsibility and the authority to monitor the use of all state resources including, computer hardware, software, mobile devices, the network, paid work time, and the use of content of all OSOS sponsored social media accounts and websites. OSOS will make the final determination of what is or is not appropriate. Misuse of state resources may result in corrective and/or disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
- B. Personal Social Media Accounts
1. Employees are free to establish and maintain personal social media accounts and websites outside of paid working time, using personal, non-state owned equipment, devices and resources.

2. Original content posted on personal social media sites should never be attributed to, or appear to be endorsed by, or to have originated from OSOS.
 3. The same principles, guidelines, and professionalism governing the use of OSOS sponsored social media accounts applies to personal social media accounts for posts where references are made to OSOS activities.
 4. Always be respectful and courteous to fellow employees, customers, members, suppliers, or people who work on behalf of OSOS. Keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work related complaints by speaking directly with your employees/co-workers or by utilizing Human Resources than by posting complaints to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, if you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparage customers, members, employees or suppliers, or that might constitute cyber misconduct.
 5. Retweeting and sharing of OSOS posts to personal accounts is acceptable without obtaining permission.
 6. OSOS employees may post original content that involves OSOS material to their personal social media accounts provided it does not interfere with a larger OSOS communications effort.
 7. State equipment and resources, including paid work time, must not be used to access personal social media accounts, unless doing so is necessary to conduct official OSOS business
 8. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for what you post online. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. Keep in mind that any of your conduct that adversely affects your job performance, the performance of fellow associates or otherwise adversely affects members, customers, suppliers, people who work on behalf of OSOS legitimate business interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
8. The point of contact for this policy is the Communications Director @ 360-902-4140 or communications@sos.wa.gov.