

Using Social Media for Agency Business

Title:	Using Social Media for Agency Business
Applies To:	Enterprise Services employees
Authorizing Sources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State law – Chapter 63.60 RCW Personality rights• Enterprise Services internal policy – Ethical Conduct• Enterprise Services policy – Public Records Request
Information Contact:	Communications Division
Effective Date:	June 11, 2012
Last Update:	Not applicable
Sunset Review Date:	June 10, 2014
Approved By:	<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">/s/ Joyce Turner Director</p>

Policy

Enterprise Services recognizes the value of social media to enhance communication, collaboration, and information exchange in support of its mission and daily operations. Enterprise Services also recognizes the risks and ethical considerations involved in the use of social media. Accordingly, Enterprise Services programs are required to consult with the Communications Division (Communications) to:

- Evaluate the need for a program’s presence within a social media application;
- Determine which social media application(s) would garner the best results for the program;
- Create a social media communication strategy and plan.

A. Communications oversees agency communications activity and will plan, review, and administer the use of social media on behalf of the agency’s programs.

Communications is responsible for administering all social media accounts on behalf of the agency and its programs.

B. Programs and employees must collaborate with Communications to gain a social media presence for agency business purposes.

Programs must first get approval from their head of their division; and then consult with, and get approval from the Communications Director.

As appropriate, the Communications Director may also choose to make a recommendation to the Management Team for final approval. The program will then collaborate with Communications, which will administer the social media tool on behalf of the program.

C. Programs and employees may use social media to gather information for business purposes.

Programs are not required to obtain approval when using social media for information gathering for business purposes. Information gathering must be done without contributing, posting, or participating in social media. Some examples of gathering information are: monitoring issues, doing research, observing discourse, and learning.

Exception:

The Human Resources Director must pre-approve the use of social media to gather information related to personnel matters, such as: hiring, discipline, and termination.

D. Programs and employees must make sure that their use of social media complies with applicable requirements.

Some state and agency requirements directly apply to activities surrounding the use of social media. At a minimum, programs and employees must know and follow the requirements governing these areas when using social media:

- Agency communications;
- Agency technology;
- Ethics;
- Labor relations;
- Privacy;
- Public records;
- Records retention.

Failure to follow the requirements for the use of social media may result in the loss of access privileges. Violation may also result in corrective and disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

E. Communications will make sure that copyright, trademark, and right of publicity (personality rights) requirements are followed when posting.

Employees posting materials must:

- Obtain copyright releases for all such material from the creators or indemnification from the entity for which the material is to be posted; or
- Obtain personality right releases for each image of a person who may have a potential claim to such a right or indemnification from the entity for which the material is to be posted.

Materials obtained from pages on social media/networking sites may or may not be the property of the page owner. Employees must not assume materials obtained from the internet are in the public domain and must follow the process outlined above.

F. Communications will review agency social media content annually.

Communications will review any social media/networking sites to evaluate the effectiveness of the social media outreach efforts. Reviews will consider whether or not the information:

- Supports and promotes the agency mission;
- Supports the state's standards of ethics in government;
- Is achieving the desired results for the program;
- Protects the intellectual property rights of creators of content;
- Protects the personality rights of any person appearing in material posted by the agency.

G. Communications will post the agency social media comment policy.

Communications will post the following text as a comment policy on social media applications to lessen any confusion about what constitutes a formal request of the agency:

We welcome your comments and hope that conversations here will be polite. You are responsible for the content of your comments.

We do not discriminate against any views, but may delete any of the following:

- Personal information including, but not limited to: personally identifiable information, email addresses, telephone numbers, mailing addresses, or identification numbers;
- Violent, obscene, profane, hateful, or racist comments;
- Comments that threaten or harm the reputation of any person or organization;
- Advertisements or solicitations of any kind;
- Comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity;
- Multiple off-topic posts or repetitive posts that are copied and pasted;
- Comments that promote or oppose any person campaigning for election to a political office or promote or oppose any ballot proposition.

In short: be nice and add to the discussion. If you continually violate this policy, we may limit your ability to comment in the future.

Comments made will in no way constitute a legal (or official) notice or comment to Enterprise Services. For example, a post or comment that asks Enterprise Services to provide public records will not be considered a public records request. Likewise, a post or comment related to a proposed rule will not be considered as a formal public comment. Please submit your formal comments directly to the agency via email.

If you have any questions or comments about this policy, please [email us](#).

Standards and Procedures

- Enterprise Services Brand Standards and Guidelines (*under development*)

Related requirements and information

- State guidance – [Office of the Governor: Guidelines and Best Practices for Social Media Use in Washington State](#)
-

Definitions

- **Social media** commonly refers to the use of the internet for blogging, microblogging, media sharing, and social networking. Social media can refer to any web-based technology that makes possible rapid communication and/or networking through the internet and/or cellular networks.

Social media includes: text, images, audio, and video. Some examples of social media are:

- Blogs and microblogs;
 - Social network (Facebook, Twitter);
 - Professional networks (LinkedIn);
 - Video sharing and vlogs (video weblogs, YouTube);
 - Audio sharing;
 - Photo sharing (Flickr);
 - Social bookmarking
-