

Jefferson County departments, officials and organizations may utilize social media platforms to further enhance communications with various organizations in support of County goals and objectives. They have the ability to publish content, facilitate discussions, and communicate information through various social media related to conducting County business. Social media facilitates further discussion of County issues, operations and services by providing members of the public with the opportunity to connect to county resources using the internet.

I. PURPOSE

This policy is intended to promote the safe, orderly, responsible and consistent use of social media by Jefferson County, its officials and employees. The County encourages, within the rules set forth herein, the use of social media. The County employs social media for the express and limited purposes of communicating the County's various messages, its vision of the County, promoting the County's government speech and allowing the public a limited venue in which to communicate with the County. The County does not intend to create any open public forums for expressive activity of the public. The County reserves the right to edit or remove any content that violates this or any other policy of the County or any applicable law.

This policy is further intended to provide a framework for use of social media when authorized by the County as part of an employee's job duties. This policy also provides general guidelines for the use of social media by all County departments, officials and employees of Jefferson County, with departments having discretion to create guidelines specific to their department or social media post as long as such guidelines are not inconsistent with this policy. The forms of social media or technology referred to in this policy include, but are not limited to Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, Twitter, Yammer, YouTube, video or wiki postings, chat rooms, personal blogs or other similar forms of online journals, or newsletters affiliated with the County.

County-owned technology resources are the property of Jefferson County, as is all data created, entered, received, stored, or transmitted via County-owned equipment. All use of social media or similar technology is subject to all County

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policies including, but not limited to, the Computer, Internet, and Telephone Use policy as well as the Harassment Policy, Including Sexual Harassment. Employees may be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge for conduct that violates County policies or rules and regulations, whether such conduct occurs on duty or off-duty.

II. Application:

This policy applies to all County employees, programs, departments, divisions, subunits (boards, committees, commissions, other bodies) and agencies; to all County official websites, both Internet and Intranet; to all other websites hosted by the County; to any division, department, agency, or subunit receiving direct services from County Management Information Systems (MIS). This policy does not apply to elected officials of the County of Jefferson. Employees who fail to comply with the terms of this policy are acting outside the scope of their employment and may be subject to discipline, up to and including involuntary termination, and personal civil liability.

H.III. POLICY

1. All Jefferson County social media platforms shall be approved by the County Administrator and the requesting Department Head. All content must be published using approved County social media platform and tools set forth in this policy or other county policies, including additional requirements specific to a department or social media platform. All content must be approved by an assigned moderator as defined below. Any fundraising efforts through social media must be approved by the County Administrator and reviewed by the Corporation Counsel prior to publication.

2. All Jefferson County social media platforms shall adhere to applicable state, federal, and local laws, regulations and County policies including, but not limited to, the Computer, Internet, and Telephone Use policy as well as the Harassment Policy, including Sexual Harassment, the Jefferson County Ethics Policy and Personnel Policy. Employees may be subject to discipline, up to and including involuntary termination for conduct that violates County policies or rules and regulations, whether such conduct occurs on duty or off-duty.
~~the Jefferson County Ethics Policy and Personnel Policy.~~

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3. Public records laws and policies apply to social media content and therefore content must be able to be managed, stored and retrieved to comply with these laws. All social media platforms and entries shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure.

4. Content deemed not suitable by Jefferson County because it is not topically related to the particular objective, or is deemed prohibited content based on the criteria in this or other policies, may be taken off the platform, but shall be retained pursuant to the records retention schedule along with a description of the reason the specific content is deemed not suitable for posting.

5. The County reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law.

6. Each Jefferson County social media platform shall include an introductory statement which clearly specifies the purpose and topical scope of the platform. Social media platforms may include links to information and content from other non-county media platforms and websites provided that there is no copyright infringement or use in violation of the social media or website policy. Where possible, social media platforms should link back to the official Jefferson County Internet site for forms, documents and other information.

7. Each Jefferson County social media platform account is proprietary and created for the exclusive use of Jefferson County for the benefit of the public. Moderators are authorized to create and post content on behalf of Jefferson County, but do not own the accounts. When the function of moderator ends, the employee shall surrender all rights, including administrative authority and passwords, to these accounts.

8. Jefferson County social media content and comments containing any of the following shall **not** be allowed for posting:

- a. Non-topically related content
- 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 regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation or other protected class

- d. Sexual content or links to sexual content unless such content is topically related
- e. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity
- f. Content that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems
- g. Content that violates copyright or other legal interest of any other party
- h. External links constituting official endorsement or representative views on behalf of the Jefferson County, ~~or~~
- i. Content promoting political outcome, a political candidate, or political party
- j. Content promoting or endorsing any religion or religious organization
- k. Content regarding or relating to any private commercial transactions or engagement in private business activities
- l. Duplicate comments, i.e. posting the same comment multiple times by the same person for no apparent reason
- m. Posting of links with no text which do not advance the discussion or make the commentator's point of view clear
- k.n. _____
- l.o. Other non-topically related content outside the limited public forum established to discuss specific County issues, operations and services

9. All County social media moderators shall be trained regarding the terms of this Jefferson County policy, including their responsibilities to review content to ensure compliance with the Social Media Policy and guidelines.

10. All social media platforms shall clearly indicate they are owned and maintained by Jefferson County and shall have Jefferson County contact information prominently displayed.

11. Where appropriate, County Management Information Systems (MIS) policies shall apply to all social media platforms and related content.

12. All County-related communication through social media tools shall be professional and conducted in accordance with County policies, practices, and expectations.

13. Jefferson County logos, marks, and insignia may be used on County social media platforms owned and maintained exclusively for County business and related County purposes. Jefferson County's name, logos, marks and insignia may not be used to promote any political party, candidate or for any other political purposes or to conduct private commercial transactions or activities.

14. Employees found in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including involuntary termination of employment.

15. Administrative Structure: any County authorized social media site will require the following:

Assigned ModeratorSite Administrator: this person will be responsible to ~~see to it~~ensure that the use of the social media site adheres to this policy and all related County policies. The name of the proposed site ~~administrator~~moderator must be filed with the County Administrator along with the request for an authorized social media platform, or if a social media platform has already been established, within 30 days following enactment of this policy. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring department head to update this information should authorized personnel change.

Backup ModeratorSite Administrator: to prevent issues related to site administration during the absence of the site administrator, all authorized sites must have a named backup site administrator~~moderator~~ also to be filed as part of the request for an authorized social media platform, or if a social media platform has already been established, within 30 days following enactment of this policy. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring department head to update this information should authorized personnel change.

Approved content authors: sponsoring departments must authorize all employee content authors for their departmental social media platform.

Login and Password Information: Login and password information for all social media sites must be filed as part of the request for an authorized social media platform, or if a social media platform has already been established, within 30 days following enactment of this policy. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring department head to update this information should authorized personnel change.

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16. The County Administrator may approve exceptions to this policy in writing on a case by case basis for good cause.

III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Content: Including, but not limited to: comments, text, graphics, video, icons, images, and avatars.

Platform: Social media sites including but not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Blogger, and YouTube.

Comments: Blogs may allow readers to add feedback comments under posts, and may also provide a feed for comments as well as for main items.

Blog: Web sites with dated items of content in reverse chronological order, self-published by bloggers. Items – called posts- may have key word tags associated with them, are usually available as feeds, and often allow commenting.

Publish: Posting, pasting, commenting, etc., to any social media platform.

Posts: Item on a blog or forum.

Presence online: Has (at least) two aspects. One is whether you show up when someone does a search on your name. The second is whether you use tools that show you are available for contact by instant messaging, voice-over IP, or other synchronous methods of communication.

Profile: Information that users provide about themselves when signing up for a social networking site. As well as a picture and basic information, this may include personal and business interests, a “blurb” and tags to help people search for like-minded people.

RSS: Short for “Really Simple Syndication.” This allows subscribers to receive content from blogs and other social media sites and have it delivered through a feed.

Social Media: Tools and platforms people use to publish, converse, and share content online. The tools include blogs, wikis, podcasts, and sites to share photos and bookmarks.

Podcasts: Audio or video content that can be downloaded automatically through a subscription to a website so you can view or listen offline.

Social Networking: Online place where people can create online profiles.

Transparency: Enhances searching, sharing, self-publishing, and commenting across networks; makes it easier to find out what's going on in any situation where there is online activity.

Moderators: Jefferson County employees designated as such in writing and authorized agents, and/or contractors.

IV. SHARING JEFFERSON COUNTY NEWS AND EVENTS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS IS AN EXCELLENT, LOW-COST WAY TO ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY. THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES ARE TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN ENGAGING IN SOCIAL MEDIA ON BEHALF OF JEFFERSON COUNTY:

Maintain confidentiality

Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Jefferson County or its employees. Use good ethical judgment and follow County policies and federal requirements, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Maintain privacy

Do not discuss a situation involving named or pictured individuals on a social media platform without their permission. As a guideline, do not post anything that you would not present in any public forum.

Do no harm

Let your social media presence(s) do no harm to Jefferson County or to yourself whether you are navigating those platforms on the job or off.

Write what you know

Ensure you write and post about your area of expertise, as it relates to your position with the County. ~~Write in the first person.~~

Understand your personal responsibility

Moderators are personally responsible for the content they publish. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time— protect your privacy.

Be aware of liability

You are responsible for what you post on social media platforms personally and professionally. Be sure that what you post today will not come back to haunt you.

Maintain transparency

The line between professional and personal business is sometimes blurred. Be thoughtful about content and potential audiences. ~~Be honest about your identity.~~ Be clear that you are sharing your views as a representative of Jefferson County.

Correct mistakes

If you make a mistake, admit it. Be upfront and be quick with your correction. If you are participating in any social media platform, you may choose to modify earlier content—just make it clear that you have done so.

Respect others

You are more likely to achieve your goals or sway others to your view(s) if you are constructive and respectful while discussing a bad experience or disagreeing with a concept or person.

Be a valued member

Make sure you are contributing valuable content. Do not hijack the discussion and redirect by posting self/organizational promoting information. Self-promoting behavior is viewed negatively and can lead to you being banned from platforms or groups.

Think before you post

What you write is ultimately your responsibility. There is no such thing as a “private” social media platform. Search engines can turn up content years after being published. Content can be forwarded or copied. Archival systems save information even if you delete content. If you feel angry or passionate about a subject, it is wise to delay your social media participation until you are calm and clear-headed. Publish only content that you would be comfortable sharing with the general public (current and future peers, employers, etc.).

If it gives you pause, pause.

If you’re about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, don’t shrug and hit “send.” Take a minute to review these guidelines and try to figure out what is bothering you, then fix it. If you are still unsure, check with your manager. Ultimately, the decision about what you publish is yours—as is the responsibility. So be sure.

Topic restrictions

Do not post any links or write any content or postings that involve or are related to the following:

- Items involved in litigation or could be in the future
- Nonpublic information of any kind
- Illegal or banned substances and narcotics
- Pornography or other offensive materials
- Defamatory, libelous, offensive or demeaning material.
- ~~Do not engage in argumentative combative~~ exchanges with members of the public
- personal opinions about posted topics or comments made by members of the public
- Private/personal matters of yourself or others
- Disparaging/threatening comments about or related to anyone
- Personal, sensitive or confidential information of any kind

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Social Media Policy and Guidelines for Moderators.

Moderator /Backup Moderator Name: _____

Date: _____

Date of Training: _____

Trainers: _____,

_____ ,

_____ ,

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