

Departmental Use and Administration of Social Media

Objective:	To outline appropriate use and management of Social Media technologies for communicating information with constituents, visitors, or other organizations related to Tompkins County programs and services.	Policy/Procedure Number:	07-02
Reference: <i>(All applicable federal, state, and local laws)</i>	Tompkins County Code of Ethics; Tompkins County Compliance Program; Administrative policies 01-06 (Public Access to Records), 07-01 (Acceptable Use of County Information Technology Resources), 08-29 (Personal Conduct), 11-05 (Retention and Disposition of Records).	Effective Date:	<i>December 6, 2016</i>
Legislative Policy Statement:	Tompkins County recognizes Social Media as a communication resource for the presentation of County issues, services, programs, alerts, and organizational directives. Prior to the decision to use Social Media, a Department Head, or Advisory Boards under the direct management of a department and established by the County, should first consider the target audience, site monitoring requirements, technical capabilities, legal risks, and records management practices.	Responsible Department:	<i>ITS</i>
		Modified Date (s):	
		Resolution No.:	<i>256</i>
		Next Scheduled Review:	<i>December 2021</i>

General Information: The use of Social Media by Tompkins County departments is optional and permitted only when a department has the ability to comply with supervision, management, and enforcement items as addressed in this policy. In particular, departments engaging in the use of Social Media services are responsible for account management, maintaining public records, information management, and information security risks associated with their use.

Department Heads may consult with the Information Technology Services Department, Information Security Compliance Officer, Public Information Officer, County Attorney, and/or the Records Management Officer for guidance on the appropriate use of Social Media services.

Departments retain the ability to define additional or enhanced Departmental Use and Administration of Social Media policies, guidelines, and procedures beyond the scope of those defined in this policy so long as they are no less strict.

I. Definitions:

Comment - A response to a Tompkins County article, social media, and/or networking site content submitted by a commenter.

Commenter - A Tompkins County official or member of the public who submits a comment for posting in response to the content of an article, social media content, and/or networking site content.

Site Administrator - An authorized Tompkins County official who creates the Social Media Site and is responsible for account management, posted articles, and information that appears on a County social media site.

Social Media - A collection of online communication channels, including websites and applications that enable users to create and share content. Examples of social media platforms include blogs, Facebook, MySpace, RSS, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Delicious, Flickr, Instagram, Snapchat, and Pinterest.

II. Policy:

A. Department Heads are responsible for determining employees authorized to access, use, or manage Social Media accounts and sites on behalf of the department and will be responsible for designating appropriate account

management roles of employees who publish or edit content on County Social Media sites. In addition, Department Heads are also responsible for determining which employee(s) serve as Commenter to represent County interests posted on Social Media sites administered by other organizations or individuals.

B. Site Administrators and Commenters, when posting or updating content to Social Media sites on behalf of Tompkins County, must represent the interests, opinions, or positions of Tompkins County, and not those that are personal in nature.

C. County Social Media sites must contain visible elements that identify them as official Tompkins County sites. Among other items, this includes: displaying an official County seal(s), department brands, contact information, a link to department web site(s), and a link(s) to the main Tompkins County web site.

D. Department Heads are responsible for authorizing the creation, administration, and deactivation of Social Media accounts and these accounts shall only be shared with authorized employees who have been designated by a Department Head to fulfill the role of Site Administrator. County Social Media network accounts must be created using an official County email account. Social Media Site Administrator passwords must be documented and maintained by a Department Head or designee. Accounts and/or passwords shall promptly be modified when an individual is no longer designated as a Site Administrator.

E. The Site Administrator is responsible for establishing and maintaining content posted to Social Media sites. The Site Administrator is responsible for monitoring these postings, and taking appropriate action when necessary, to protect the site from the posting of "inappropriate" information, comments, and links.

F. Departmental use and content of Social Media sites shall be documented and maintained to the extent practical by the Site Administrator in an accessible format that tracks and preserves items that may be considered public record and possibly subject to disclosure under the New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), or legal electronic discovery (e-discovery).

G. Departmental use of Social Media must comply with laws and procedures including, but not limited to, copyright, records retention, privacy laws, the Tompkins County Compliance Program, NYS Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), HIPAA (Healthcare Insurance Portability and Accountability Act), and HITECH (Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health). Departments shall not disclose confidential or proprietary information on Social Media sites. Sharing of posted 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, and links.

H. Departments choosing to allow discussion, or two-way communication, by Commenters on Social Media sites administered by the County shall consult with the County Attorney to develop department-specific disclaimers to meet the County's legal needs. Sites that allow discussion shall inform Commenters of the intended purpose of the site and provide a clear statement of the topic introduced for discussion so that the public is aware of the limited nature of the discussion.

Inappropriate posts subject to removal typically include, but are not limited to, the following types of postings regardless of format (text, video, images, links, documents, etc.):

- Comments not topically related;
- Profane language or content;

- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, alienage, disability, medical condition, military status, familial status, or any other status or category protected by law;
- Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
- Content that violates the legal ownership interests of any other party; and
- Information that may tend to compromise the safety and security of the public, public systems, and County personnel, elected officials, appointed officers, and volunteers; and
- Both negative and positive comments and content related to the performance of County personnel; and
- Comments determined to be threatening by the County.

III. Procedure:

Access to Social Media Site from the County Network

In order to provide access to Social Media sites and services, a Department Head must submit in writing to the Information Technology Services Department a request for the designated staff person to be removed from the Social Media web-filtering restrictions, if such web-filtering restrictions have been implemented.

Centralized Inventory of All Tompkins County Social Media Sites

Each department utilizing Social Media must provide site and account information to the Tompkins County Public Information Officer for the purpose of maintaining a centralized inventory of all Tompkins County Social Media sites. This information must include at a minimum the Department name, Site Administrator name(s), and links or handles necessary to access County-managed Social Media content.

Site Monitoring

Departmental Social Media pages shall be monitored regularly, and prompt corrective action shall be taken when an issue arises that places, or has the potential to place, the County at risk.

- A. A Department that allows the public to post comments, links, or material directly onto the department's Social Media site shall have an established process to verify that the postings are acceptable. Such site activity and content shall be reviewed daily for possible exploitation or misuse. Posts deemed harmful or inappropriate by the County shall be handled in accordance with this policy (also *see* item II.H of this policy).
- B. If a comment posted to a County managed Social Media site by a member of the public includes threatening language or may signal an imminent danger to any department or individual, the Site Administrator must record the comment and immediately notify the Department Head. The comment(s) must be removed as soon as possible (also *see* item II.H of this policy). The Site Administrator or Department Head may also wish to consult with the County Attorney and/or County Administrator if there are liability concerns.