

Resource Contact: Marketing and Communications Director

Effective: May 13, 2014

Using Social Media for Agency Business

- Purpose:** This policy describes how the agency will use social media and give WSHS employees direction and guidelines for proper use of social media while at work and outside the workplace
- Application:** This policy applies to all employees and volunteers of Washington State Historical Society.

Definition

Social Media is an umbrella term encompassing various activities that integrate technology, social interaction and content creation. There are numerous forms of social media, such as blogs, wikis, photo and video sharing, podcasts, social networking, ideation, bookmarking, discussion boards, gamification, and virtual worlds. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Blogger, YouTube, Flickr, Delicious, Wikipedia and IdeaScale.

1. The Purpose of Policy

Social media tools are a powerful method of communication and are used by millions of individuals and groups to share information and connect with others. WSHS will use social media tools and channels when appropriate to enhance communication and engagement with customers, partners, stakeholders, employers, employees and others to support its mission, key goals and core processes.

2. Management of WSHS Social Media Accounts

The WSHS, at the direction of the Marketing and Communications Director or designee(s), is responsible for establishing and supervising all social media accounts for the agency. These accounts are considered agency tools. Individual employees may not establish a WSHS-sponsored social media account without approval from the Marketing and Communications Director.

The WSHS Communications Team, at the direction of the Marketing and Communications Director or designee(s), is responsible for establishing, monitoring and administering policies for appropriate conduct, content, security, and records retention on all social media accounts for the agency.

The posting and maintenance of content on WSHS-sponsored social media accounts is limited to Social Media Representatives designated by the Marketing and Communications Director. Only Social Media Representatives are permitted to log on and/or contribute content to WSHS-sponsored social media accounts. Social media account management shall take place during paid work hours using state equipment, the only exception is that of the Marketing and Communications Director's time and usage.

3. Employee Access to Social Media

WSHS employees may view social media for professional use. Professional use is defined as furthering specific job responsibilities or promoting professional development. Professional use also includes sharing agency posts for the purpose of promoting agency activities. Reasonable use in this manner is permitted.

If an employee requires logon access to a social media site to accomplish a specific task related to agency business, the logon must be pre-approved by his or her Appointing Authority or by the Marketing and Communications Director.

WSHS employees may view the agency's social media accounts for the purpose of staying informed of WSHS external communications. Reasonable use in this manner is permitted.

In accordance with WSHS Policy 1-1 *Ethics in Public Service* and WSHS Policy 1-43 *Using Electronic Message Systems*, no employees may use state resources, including but not limited to work time, computers, and software programs such as Internet and email for the purposes of viewing, or posting to non-work related social media. There is no *de minimis* personal use of social media allowed.

4. Employee Obligations Regarding Personal Use of Social Media

WSHS takes no position on employees' personal use of social media outside the workplace (that is, using their own time and their own resources). It is the agency's obligation, however, to inform all employees of their responsibilities regarding communications involving the agency, its employees and its customers on personal social media sites:

- a. Employees Cannot Represent WSHS on Personal Social Media Sites
No employee may, or represent that they do, speak on behalf of the agency on a personal social media site except as authorized by the Marketing and Communications Director and in the course of their official capacity as a WSHS employee. Employees who mention WSHS as their employer on a personal media site should identify any views they express as theirs alone and not representative of the views of the agency.
- b. Disclosure of Confidential Agency Information is Prohibited
A WSHS employee may not post confidential or private information about the agency, employees or WSHS customers on any social media site. Employees should avoid sharing any media which may include confidential or private information (for example, reports on desks or computer screens in the background). The sharing of private or confidential information is subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- c. Conduct of Agency Business on Personal Social Media Sites is Prohibited
Agency business is to be performed during established work hours using agency resources. Employees must not conduct agency business or discuss work-related issues on personal social media sites.
- d. Use of WSHS Name, Logo and Media is Strictly Limited
While an employee may list WSHS as his or her employer on a personal social media site, use of the WSHS logo is prohibited (except as it is automatically loaded by the social media provider). Use of other agency media (for example, photos, images or video) is not appropriate without specific permission from the Marketing and Communications Director. Use of the agency's name and/or logo to promote personal causes, outside employment, personal political beliefs, etc., on a social media site is also prohibited.

5. Personal Legal Responsibility

WSHS Employee(s) should be aware that an individual is legally responsible for anything he or she posts or writes on a personal social media site. An employee may be disciplined for commentary, content or images that are defamatory, proprietary, harassing or libelous to the agency or that create a hostile work environment.

WSHS employees should also be aware that they may be subject to personal legal action if an individual personally views the commentary, content, or images as defamatory, harassing or libelous or as creating a hostile work environment.

6. Best Practices are Recommended

Common sense and sound judgment are usually the best tools in avoiding problems. The following best practices are highly recommended for any WSHS employee who utilizes social media for personal use:

- Be respectful – Individuals should be thoughtful in personal posts and respectful of how other people in your work and personal life may be affected or viewed by those who read your posts. When disagreeing with others’ opinions, keep it appropriate and polite.
- Honor others’ privacy – If you plan on posting photos you have taken of work-related events and activities, be courteous by checking first with co-workers who are in the picture. Not everyone wants their photo displayed on the Internet.
- Strive for accuracy – Make sure you have your facts straight before posting.
- Correct errors quickly – If you make a mistake, admit it. Be upfront and quickly provide the correct information. If appropriate, modify an earlier post to make it clear that you have corrected an error.
- Be aware of your WSHS association – If you identify yourself as a WSHS employee or have a public facing position for which your WSHS association is known to the general public ensure your profile and related content (even if it is of a personal and not an official nature) is consistent with how you wish to present yourself as a WSHS professional, appropriate with the public trust associated with your position.
- Repost or Retweet – When promoting WSHS exhibits, programs, events, and news on your personal social media accounts, to keep messaging accurate and consistent, you are encouraged to repost or retweet posts from the agency social media pages.
- Have no expectation of privacy – It is social media, after all. Remember that posts in the social media world are or can easily be made available to the public at-large. Keep in mind that what you publish will be widely accessible for some time and, in some cases, indefinitely.

Approved: _____
Jennifer Kilmer
Director

Date