



Contra Costa County Social Media Policy

This policy establishes guidelines governing the use of social media by County employees for the purpose of communicating to the public. Social media should be understood to include any web-based tool that allows for open communication on the internet, including but not limited to micro-blog sites (Twitter,) social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn,) video sharing sites (YouTube,) and image sharing sites (Instagram).

Contra Costa County departments, offices and divisions may use social media when its use will further the business goals of the County and the missions of its departments. The County supports the secure use of approved and established social media tools to deliver information to the public.

For departments, offices and divisions that have a business need to communicate via social media, this policy will govern the use of those tools.

1. All official Contra Costa County accounts on social media sites are considered an extension of the County's business and are governed by applicable County policies pertaining to email, Internet use and security. Accounts must be managed by County employees, not interns, contractors or volunteers.
2. Accounts should be established and managed by departments following terms of service negotiated with social media providers by the federal government and the National Association of State Chief Information Officers. Staff shall use official government accounts rather than personal accounts to represent County services and programs.
3. Departmental and office accounts will be centrally coordinated through a County Social Media Registry. Existing accounts will be grandfathered-in; new accounts will be requested through the Office of Communications and Media for departments that do not have official communications staff. All account administrators will provide their contact information and a backup contact for the registry in the event of a problem or security issue with their account.
4. Social media account managers will attend annual training to ensure compliance with applicable security and privacy laws, copyright, records retention, the California Public Records Act and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA.)
5. Contra Costa County's countywide and departmental websites will remain the primary and predominant internet presences. Whenever possible, content posted to County social media sites will also be available on related County websites to make information accessible to residents who do not use social media. Content posted to County social media sites should, when practical, contain links directing users back to official County



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websites for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services necessary for conducting business with Contra Costa County.

6. In the event of an emergency, all County social media contents and postings should be coordinated through the Office of Communication and Media or its designee. Departments with official communications staff will take the lead in delivering their emergency information and keep the Office of Communications and Media informed. The goal will be to ensure that messages are consistent across the many accounts and platforms managed by the County. Depending upon the incident, account managers may be asked to point to specific departmental social media sites that will serve as the main source of information.
7. Employees communicating on behalf of the County via social media are, in fact, representing the County at all times. Employees who fail to adhere to the guidelines and conduct themselves as agents of the County will be removed from account administration and may be subject to disciplinary action.
8. Guidelines for using approved social media tools and specific “how to” instructions for establishing and maintaining accounts will be provided to all County users, and updated regularly in an online tool kit.