



LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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1. DEFINITION

“Social media” means an interactive web platform via which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content i.e. like Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook. Any conversation or activity occurs online, where people can share information or data that might affect the Department or the people who use its services.

“Communication” means an activity of conveying information through the exchange of thoughts, messages, or information, through speech, visuals, signals, writing, or behavior. Communication requires a sender, a message, and a recipient. The process of communication is complete once the receiver has understood the message of the sender.

“Department” means Department of Transport and Community Safety (DTCS)

“Official use” means when an employee is using social media as a representative of the department. It is when an employee is posting from a social media account that is labeled as an official account, i.e., not a distinct individual person. Posts from the department accounts must comply with departmental communication policy.

“Personal use” means when an employee, volunteer or supporter is using social media as themselves, not officially representing Transport and Community Safety, but identifying themselves as affiliated with the Department in their online biographies, profiles, or posts, or through other digital platforms.

“Website” means a set of related web pages containing content such as text, images, video, audio, etc.

“Employee” means a person, who works for the department and who receives or is entitled to receive remuneration in terms of the Public Service Act 103 of 1994, (as amended) or any relevant legislation/ regulation.

“Director” means Director of Communication Services.

2. ABBREVIATIONS

“HOD” means Head of Department.

“MEC” means Member of the Executive Council.

“SBU” means Strategic Business Unit.

3. PREAMBLE

Social media is a group of web-based applications that enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Social media occur in a variety of formats including chat rooms, weblogs, social blogs, wikis, micro blogging, internet fora, podcasts, pictures, video, and rating and social bookmarking. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to Facebook, LinkedIn, Myspace, YouTube, Flickr, and Twitter.

Social media channels are used as additional communication and promotion tools to complement the existing communication and marketing avenues. Social media is being used to distribute messages; updates and information on service; community interaction, and for the public to support learning about departmental services, resources, and campaigns.

4. PURPOSE

This policy is intended to provide employees in the department with clarity on the use of social media platforms.

5. POLICY OBJECTIVES

5.1 To ensure that the department is visible, accessible, and accountable to the public it serves.

5.2 To provide the public, stakeholders, and the media with complete, accurate, clear and timely information about the department's policies, services and initiatives.

5.3 To identify and address communication needs for both internal and external publics of the department to enable the exchange of information by delivering prompt responses to requests for information.

5.4 To guide officials of the department in their dealings with the media, internal communication, and external communication on social media platforms.

6. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- 6.1 Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act 75 of 1997)
- 6.2 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996).
- 6.3 Copyright Act, 1978 (Act 98 of 1978)
- 6.4 Electronic Communications and Transactions Act, 2002 (Act 25 of 2002)
- 6.5 Electronic Communications Act, 2005 (Act 36 of 2005)
- 6.6 GCIS Social Media Guidelines, April 2011
- 6.7 Government Communicator's Handbook, 2010/2011
- 6.8 Minimum Information Security Standards (MISS)
- 6.9 Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 2 of 1999)
- 6.10 Public Service Act 103 of 1994 (as amended)
- 6.11 POPIA (POPI Act), Protection of Personal Information Act, (Act 1 of 2021)

7. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy applies to all employees of the department

8. POLICY PROCLAMATION

8.1. Identification

Identification is how a social media bio, post, tweet account, blog or page description identifies that particular social media channel as being affiliated with the department.

8.2. Official accounts

An official account (being it a blog, webpage, twitter account, Facebook page etc.) that represents the department should stipulate this within its page or account description. An official social media page must be sanctioned by the Director. The account must carry the following words: "This is the official account/page/etc. for the department /etc." followed by a brief description of department and the purpose of the account relating to the particular social media platform.

8.3. Personal accounts

Accounts (being it a blog, webpage, twitter account, Facebook page etc.) that are not official, but are set up by employees, volunteers, or supporters of the department for personal reasons can have an affiliation to the department's account, so long as the following is undertaken:

6.3.1 It should not have the affiliation with the department as the primary identifier.

6.3.2 It should stipulate that the opinions and views expressed are the persons' own.

8.4. Permissions

The department's Communications Services Directorate is responsible for all official use of departmental social media. Personal use is up to the individual employee, however, individuals are accountable for the consequences of their actions on social media.

8.5. Personal use

Individuals who are employees of the department do not have permission to post official departmental content. They can, however, repost, re-tweet etc., Departmental posts, material, or comment without substantial or meaningful change as part of showing their affiliation or support for the department.

8.6. Inappropriate use

Inappropriate use of departmental social media includes, (but not limited to):

8.6.1. Conducting a private business on the departmental social media presence.

8.6.2. Using discriminatory, defamatory, abusive, or otherwise objectionable language.

8.6.3. Stalking, bullying, trolling, or marginalizing any individual or group.

8.6.4. Accessing or uploading pornographic, gambling, or illegal content, including extreme images of graphic content (blood and gore etc.) or information regarding activity relating to firearms, bombs, terrorism etc.

8.6.5. Accessing sites that promote hatred or extreme/fundamental beliefs and values.

8.6.6. Direct political affiliation, excessive unauthorized debate on public platforms.

- 8.6.7. Uploading information of a confidential nature, especially with regards to departmental services, clients, and stakeholders.
- 8.6.8. Hacking or attempting to infiltrate the systems of the department or another organization.
- 8.6.9. Criticizing or demeaning the department, or other organizations, and their employees.
- 8.6.10. Activity that interferes with work commitments and uses excessive bandwidth, either uploading or downloading, within the department. Paid endorsement of any kind, including in kind services or gifts.
- 8.6.11. Activity that brings the department or the person's professionalism or ability to act in a professional manner into disrepute.
- 8.6.12. It is the duty of everyone who is affiliated with social media to alert Director of Communications Services to any inappropriate content they may come across.

9. POLICY BREACH

Misuse of social media can have serious consequences for the department, and consequently that misuse can have serious consequences in terms of disciplinary action for staff. The Director is responsible for ensuring adherence to the social media Policy by their staff members. This includes undertaking appropriate risk assessment and performance management, of any suspected or identified breach.

10. DELEGATIONS

The Director has delegation for all official social media activity undertaken by the department. The Director has the final authority on the primary and secondary delegations.

11. OTHERS

Individuals who undertake personal activity in the social media space can self-moderate. They should be sensible about their use, always ensuring that they are in line with the requirements of this social media policy.

12.COMPLAINTS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Complaints or negative comments regarding the department will be made through other communication platforms. Both official and personal users of social media are discouraged from arguing or refuting complaints or negative feedback through social media channels. This behavior can antagonize or fuel further attacks on the departmental services, brand and/or reputation.

In the event of a complaint or negative comment about the department, it is important to address the comment as soon as possible through relevant channels.

13.DELETING SOCIAL POSTS

Social media is fluid, two-way, busy, and often self-regulating. Social media can be used to disseminate information but should be considered a form of two-way communication and a vehicle to listen to the 'wider' community views. The department will not delete posts that are complaints, or negative, except when they breach any of the conditions outlined for employees in the 'inappropriate use'.

14.DEFAULT

Non-compliance with the policy shall constitute violation of the policy and shall be treated in terms of the Departmental disciplinary code and procedure (PSBC Resolution 1 of 2003).

15.INCEPTION DATE

The inception date of this policy will be within 30 days after the approval by the Executive Authority

16.REVIEW CONDITIONS

This policy shall be reviewed bi-annually or when the need arises

17. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

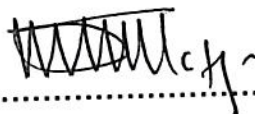
Communication management unit will monitor the implementation of this policy. The Monitoring and Evaluation unit will also track progress and policy achievement in terms of the objectives.

18. ENQUIRIES

Enquiries about the policy should be directed to the office of the Director, Communication Services.

RECOMMENDED/~~NOT RECOMMENDED~~

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ACCOUNTING OFFICER

07/09/2022
.....
DATE

APPROVED /~~NOT APPROVED~~

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.....
MEMBER OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

11 September 2022
.....
DATE