

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

---

### **SUMMARY**

This policy applies to all Miami-Dade County departments whose employees participate in what are known as social media or social networking technologies for their departments and the County. These technologies include, but are not limited to, blogs; wikis; RSS feeds; social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, NextDoor, LinkedIn; microblogs such as Twitter; photo sharing sites such as Flickr; customer feedback sites such as Yelp and Google; and, video sharing sites such as YouTube.

This Social Media Policy establishes guidelines for the establishment and use by the County departments' social media sites as a means of conveying information to members of the public. The intended purpose of the County social media sites is to disseminate information from the County, about the County mission, meetings, activities, and current issues to members of the public. The County has an overriding interest and expectation in protecting the integrity of the information posted on its social media sites and the content that is attributed to the County and its Departments.

### **POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

#### **PURPOSE:**

When communicating with the public on behalf of Miami-Dade County and/or its departments either directly or indirectly via any social media platform and any other public posting tool, our job is to ensure that the information is consistent with the mission and goals of the County.

#### **POLICY:**

All County employees, when communicating on behalf of Miami-Dade County and/or its departments, are required to adhere to this policy when posting or representing themselves on social media. Miami-Dade County has the right to monitor and review all postings made by its employees on behalf of the County on social media platforms for compliance with County and Department policy.

#### **AUTHORITY:**

The Mayor's Office of Communications has been delegated the authority to promulgate rules governing official use of social media by the Mayor of Miami-Dade County pursuant to Sections 5.01 and 5.02 of the Miami-Dade County Home Rule Charter.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY:**

It is the responsibility of the Mayor's Communications Director or designee to review and update this policy periodically. The department responsible for the social media site must secure (or set privacy settings for) each social media site so that only County employees assigned by the

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

---

applicable department can post to the site. Social media administrators should take appropriate steps to minimize security risks in order to prevent fraud or unauthorized access to social media sites. To this end, the County has implemented an enterprise social media management tool that each County department is required to utilize. As of the effective date of this policy, the County's official and current enterprise social media management system is Oracle Social Relationship Management (SRM).

### DEFINITION(S):

- A. *Account Handles* – Account user names used throughout different social media platforms to identify the user. Handles are public user names that identify people/entities online.
- B. *Authorized Social Media Accounts* – Social media accounts that utilize the brand, likeness, and or identity of Miami-Dade County or any of its departments or administrators.
- C. *Social Media Administrator* – The person who is designated by each department's director to manage all social media for that department authorized by the Mayor's Office of Communications, or designee.
- D. *Mayor's Communications Director* – The Mayor's designee who serves as the principal liaison between the County administration, the media and the public.
- E. *Communications Department* – This department reports to the Mayor's Communications Director and serves as the administrator for systems associated to the use of social media including, but not limited to, the enterprise social media management and archiving tools.
- F. *Blog* – a website containing a writer's or group of writers' own experiences, observations, opinions, etc., and often contains images and links to other websites.
- G. *Multi-media* – a combination of sound, video, graphics, and text for communicating ideas.
- H. *Networking site* – a dedicated site or other application that enables users to connect with each other based on professional or personal profiles.
- I. *Social Media Platform* – any web-based technology used for community-based input, interaction, content-sharing, blogs, and collaborations.
- J. *Social networking site* – a dedicated site or other application that enables users to communicate with each other by posting information, comments, messages, videos, images, etc.
- K. *Website* – a connected group of pages on the world wide web and regarded as a single entity and commonly maintained by a single organization or person.

### REQUIREMENTS:

#### **A. COUNTY DEPARTMENT SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT**

##### 1. Authorizations

- a. All County social media accounts must be approved by and registered with the Mayor's Office of Communications. Unapproved or unregistered accounts will be deemed unauthorized and be closed and/or removed.

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

---

- b. All County departments must use the Countywide social media scheduling tool enterprise (i.e. Oracle Social Relationship Management) to manage accounts and to schedule all non-emergency social media posts.
  - c. Department Directors shall ensure that their departments do not operate internal-facing employee social media groups without proper authorization from the Mayor's Communications Director or designee. Neither the County, nor its departments, are permitted to have closed groups on social networks.
2. Planning and Strategy
- a. Departments should develop a social media strategy in line with their Business and Communications plan. Departmental social media strategies should include development of messaging that will serve the community and grow their accounts. The Communications Department is available to assist departments in developing a strategy for using social media to enhance communication, collaboration, and transparency that is consistent with the mission and goals of each department and Miami-Dade County.
  - b. All social media accounts created with the intent to disseminate County and/or Department-related content including, but not limited to: written material, graphics, photos, audio, and video must first be approved by each Department's Director or designee and must be channeled through the Mayor's Office of Communications or designee for authorization prior to account creation by completing a Social Media Self-Assessment form.
  - c. Unauthorized social media accounts that represent or refer to Miami-Dade County, its departments, its brand, or likeness, shall be shut down. The Mayor's Office of Communications, or designee, will monitor such accounts and demand termination as necessary.
  - d. All social media administrators shall provide all usernames and passwords for access to their designated department account(s) to the Mayor's Communications Director or designee. The Mayor's Communications Director may access, modify, suspend, or terminate such accounts at any time for any reason.
  - e. Department social media workflows must be submitted to the Mayor's Office of Communications, or designee, for incorporation into the enterprise social media monitoring system. These workflows must include roles and processes for live tweeting/posting during an identified emergency situation.

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

---

- f. Departments that use social media are responsible for complying with applicable federal, state, and county laws, regulations, and policies. This includes adherence to laws and policies regarding copyright, use of photographs, records retention, personnel privacy, public records, First Amendment, HIPAA privacy, the Americans with Disabilities Act (Facebook and Twitter have ADA settings), and information security policies established by the Mayor's Office of Communications or designee. Departments should be aware of and comply with the State of Florida General Records Schedule GS1-SL for State and Local Government Agencies, as may be amended from time to time.
- g. Employees administering social media platforms should be aware of the Terms of Service (TOS) of each social media site. Each has its own unique TOS that regulates how users interact using that particular form of media. Any employee using a form of social media on behalf of a County department should consult the most current TOS in order to avoid violations. If the TOS contradicts County policy, then the Office of the Mayor or designee should be made aware and a decision will be made about whether use of such media is appropriate.
- h. Violation of these standards may result in the removal of pages and/or accounts from social media sites. The Office of the Mayor or designee retains the authority to remove information.

### **B. GENERAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE**

- 1. The following rules are provided to clearly define successful use of social media tools for all Miami-Dade County employees communicating on behalf of Miami-Dade County:
  - a. Social media posts via departmental handles and pages shall be related to official County business, information related to each individual department and information that impacts the community (i.e. traffic alerts, service interruptions, etc.).
  - b. The Mayor's Office of Communications or designee, will monitor and review social media posts scheduled by County departments through the enterprise social media monitoring tool to ensure compliance with this policy. If modifications are deemed necessary, individual department's Social Media Administrators will be advised.
  - c. All posts should relate to Miami-Dade County events, programs or services when possible and incorporate the County brand per the Miami-Dade County

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

---

Branding and Style Guide that includes proper use of logos and identifiers as well as exemptions (see [Social Media Branding Guide](#)).

- d. Miami-Dade County employees shall not represent themselves as an official representative of Miami-Dade County on any social media post, website, blog, networking site, or other public posting platform, unless expressly authorized by the Mayor's Communications Director and their Department Director.
- e. Employees shall not disclose information that is confidential under federal, state or local laws or exempt from public disclosure under the Florida's Public Records Laws. In the event that disclosure of exempt information may be in the best interest of the County or the public, such disclosure shall not be made without prior authorization of the Mayor's Communications Director in consultation with County Attorney's Office.
- f. Employees shall not utilize an official County email address to establish a personal social media account. Additionally, employees shall not utilize a personal email address to establish an official County or Department social media account.
- g. Employees have no expectation of privacy while using the Department-owned or leased equipment, even when using this equipment to access their personal email account or any social media site. Authorized use of County equipment and networks is regulated by the Information Technology Department (ITD) under Administrative Order 5-5.
- h. All personnel shall comply with County Social Media Policies and any additional guidelines set forth by specific Departments. Failure to comply with all applicable policies may result in disciplinary action, up to termination.
- i. Government pages should not reflect personal views or favorites. Employees should be mindful that social media sites frequently change their settings. As a result, employees should constantly monitor Department pages to ensure inappropriate content does not appear on the County social media sites.
- j. Employees must not use County-related social networking sites for political purposes, to conduct private commercial transactions, or to engage in private business activities. Employees should be mindful that inappropriate use of County-related social media can be grounds for disciplinary action.

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

---

- k. Departments that want to produce video content with the Communications Department will work with the Communications Department to produce the video and ensure that professional standards of quality and branding are met. Departments that want to use external production companies must request through the Communications Department to access the Marketing Services Pool. Departments are permitted to produce their own videos in-house so long as proper standards are adhered to.
  - l. All videos produced must not infringe on any copyrighted material or trademark, including, but not limited to: Music, video, graphics, animations, logos, trademarks, photographs, etc. See Exhibit 1 of this document to review the Social Media Video Post Guidelines.
  - m. County departments must not post contests, campaigns, campaign driven hashtags, giveaways, or departmental videos on social networking or web based video sharing sites (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Yahoo, Google, Snapchat, Instagram, etc.) without approval from the Department Director or designee.
2. Best Practices: When developing the content and design of the site, the following "dos and don'ts" should be considered.
- a. What To Do
    - 1. Know the audience.
    - 2. Monitor sites frequently and respond to comments/questions as soon as possible, but no later than the next business day.
    - 3. Create an account and follow/like other County sites.
    - 4. Develop a monthly evaluation plan. As part of a monthly evaluation, track the performance of accounts as a key indicator of how well social media is being used to better communicate and engage.
    - 5. Use proper grammar and punctuation.
    - 6. Pre-write content ahead of time. However, always check your news feed before posting to ensure your post is not tone deaf or inappropriate due to "breaking news".
    - 7. Be cautious in sharing User Posts. Use good judgment prior to posting.
      - a. Is there a reason to share it?
      - b. Is it from a trustworthy source?
      - c. How does it make the County look?
      - d. How does it make the original poster look?
      - e. Is it embarrassing or does it make someone else look bad?
      - f. Does it look like the County is endorsing something?
      - g. Is formal permission required?

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

---

- h. Look at the original poster's profile. Is this someone with whom the County should be associated?
- b. What Not To Do:
  - 1. Do not delete or erase comments without guidelines established and posted. Only comments that violate the terms of those posted guidelines may be deleted. A comment may not be deleted simply because it is deemed to be negative. If the comment is a complaint about County services and a solution can be offered, a response should be given on the Page so other followers can see they can come to County's social media sites for answers and assistance. Do not engage negative or "trolling" comments for which we cannot offer solutions or provide an answer.
  - 2. Do not post personal information and be aware of legal requirements and policies protecting a person's right to privacy, such as, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) protects a person's health information. Seek advice from legal counsel before posting any personal information.
  - 3. Avoid posting content that portrays an individual in an obviously negative light, such as displaying an undesirable expression.
  - 4. Do not use social media platforms the County does not currently use or any emerging platforms: When/if the need arises, the Mayor's Office of Communications, or designee, staff will evaluate the County's need for them and create guidelines as needed.
- 3. Legal Considerations: Social media administrators must ensure their department's social media accounts are part of the County's official digital records retention enterprise system, which, as of the effective date of this policy, is ArchiveSocial. In order to avoid liability for the employee and the County, do not post or make comments that:
  - a. Discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, disability, pregnancy, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran's status, or actual or perceived status as a victim of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking, source of income, national origin, weight, height, ancestry, or genetic information.
  - b. Are sexual in nature.
  - c. Compromise the safety or security of the County or individuals, or contain any confidential information of the County, or confidential information of others.
  - d. Support or oppose a political candidate or ballot measure.
  - e. Express personal views or concerns. Postings shall reflect the views of the

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

---

- County.
- f. Contain religious messages or advocate or promote religious beliefs.
  - g. Solicit commerce or advertise businesses unrelated to the County's mission, values, image, and interests.
  - h. Promote illegal activity or violate any local, state or federal laws.
  - i. Violate another party's privacy, copyright, trademark, or other protected property.
  - j. Are obscene or profane; or otherwise violate another County policy.
4. SOCIAL MEDIA POSTING DURING AN EMERGENCY
- a. During any emergency situation, the Mayor's Communications Director will determine which department will take the lead for all communication via social media. Once designated by the Mayor's Office, all departments must defer the posting of information to the department handling the incident, unless otherwise approved by the Mayor's Communications Director. Departments are encouraged to share emergency-related information that would be relevant to their followers.
  - b. The lead agency assigned by the Mayor's Communications Director may provide social media posts in Spanish and/or Creole during emergency situations, as necessary.
  - c. During an activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) all departments must adhere to rules set forth in the ESF-14.
5. EXTERNAL COMMENTS
- a. Visitors to County social media sites cannot be permanently banned or blocked. If visitor-generated content is in violation of the posted guidelines, each comment or post should be reviewed and hidden, if possible. Inappropriate comments that are also in violation of the social media site's Terms of Service (TOS) should also be reported directly to the social media platform.
  - b. If a County department receives an online and/or social media direct message or comment that is interpreted as a threat or potential act of violence, please contact Southeast Florida Fusion Center at [seffc@mdpd.com](mailto:seffc@mdpd.com) and copy [socialmedia@miamidade.gov](mailto:socialmedia@miamidade.gov). Call the Miami-Dade Police Department, Homeland Security Bureau at 305-470-3900 should you have additional follow-up questions or concerns. For emergencies, please dial 9-1-1.



## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

---

### **C. MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT**

1. The Communications Department will research and make recommendations on new social media tools, trends, technologies, and practices that advance the goals of the County and its departments.
2. The Communications Department will monitor content and may “retweet” or “share” said content from the main Miami-Dade County social media accounts where appropriate.

### **D. FLORIDA PUBLIC RECORDS RETENTION**

The Florida Public Records Law (Florida Statutes, Chapter 119) requires that government agencies preserve public records regardless of physical form. Departments and employees should be aware of and comply with the State of Florida General Records Schedule GS1-SL for State and Local Government Agencies, as may be amended from time to time. Public records that need to be preserved include digital records (posts) created through social media and any raw material used to create post. The County utilizes an enterprise-wide solution to capture and preserve social media activity, in its native format, in order to ensure authenticity of records to meet legal and compliance requirements. All County Departments must comply with these requirements by providing username and passwords to the Mayor’s Communications Director or designee so accounts can be registered in the enterprise social media archiving system. Departments must use the enterprise tool to capture and archive digital records and comments. Therefore, until further notice, social media platforms such as Instagram Stories and Snapchat, shall not be used by departments to communicate via social media as they are not archivable. Even departments that have been granted an exemption by the Mayor’s Office of Communications from using the enterprise tool, must have a system in place for archiving all communications as described above.

### **E. SOCIAL MEDIA ADMINISTRATOR**

1. The Social Media Administrator will be responsible for creating and posting content that is related to the department for which they are assigned. The posting of department-specific content must be in compliance with all standard County and department social media.
2. The Social Media Administrator must use a generic County email account that is accessible by multiple employees within the department, as well as the Mayor’s Office of Communications or designee, for the purpose of creating and accessing social media accounts upon approval of the Social Media Self-Assessment by the Mayor’s Office of Communications or designee.
3. The Social Media Administrator will notify users (e.g., fans, followers) of the social media site through the posting of established guidelines of the site’s intended

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

---

purpose and under what circumstances content may be removed.

4. The Communications Department maintains and publishes the [Social Media Directory](#), which lists all social media sites in the County.
5. The Social Media Administrator shall protect the integrity of the County's digital platforms by providing and updating the Mayor's Office of Communications with name/s and email addresses of the Department's Social Media Administrator immediately if there are any changes in personnel.
6. The Social Media Administrator will moderate the department's social media accounts to ensure that it is free of off-topic or inappropriate content, including but not limited to: crude language; defamatory, harassing or bullying statements; personally identifiable information; material of a sexually prurient nature; advertisements for alcohol, tobacco or weapons; commercial solicitations unless on behalf of the County; statements for or against a candidate for political office, cause or proposition; statements that advocate unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, disability, pregnancy, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran's status, or actual or perceived status as a victim of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking, source of income, national origin, weight, height, ancestry or genetic information; statements that endanger public health, safety and security; statements that encourage, provide advice for or solicit the commission of a criminal act; and content that violates intellectual property or copyright laws. Each department's expertise to accurately respond to comments and/or provide answers to questions received on the main County social media channels regarding the department must be provided in a timely fashion. Once an initial response and/or answer is published, departments are expected to monitor the post and provide additional responses as soon as possible, if needed.
7. The Social Media Administrator shall ensure that each social media site the Department uses contains the following disclaimer in a conspicuous location on the social media site where possible.

*Under Florida law, names, photos, social media posts, messages, e-mail addresses, and other information submitted to the host of this page or posted on this site are public records. If you do not want your information released in response to a public records request, do not send electronic mail or messages to this host or post on this site. Instead, contact the department that hosts this site by phone.*

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

---

8. As the administrators of the enterprise social media archiving system, County departments shall filter public records requests pertaining to social media activity to the Communications Department. Subsequently, in cooperation with the Mayor's Communications Director, or designee, or the County Attorney's Office the Communications Department will work with departments to ensure that responses are complete and have considered any exemptions under Florida Public Records laws.
9. The Social Media Administrator shall obtain written permission when using someone's intellectual property or when using a person's likeness on a social media site, whether captured in video or photographic format. The signed Photo & Video Release Form must be kept on file as part of the respective department's social media records. The release form is only for campaign ads or promotional videos; for Facebook Live or live events, a photo permission form is not necessary if it is a public event.
10. The Social Media Administrator shall ensure that topics posted to social media contain links that direct users back to the County's website for additional information when applicable.

### F. DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS

1. Department Directors shall complete the Self-Assessment and Memorandum of Understanding prior to establishing social media accounts in order to determine whether the department's goals and strategies are consistent with the County's, and that the department has the necessary resources to adequately maintain and moderate the social media accounts.
2. Department Directors or their designees shall provide in writing to the Mayor's Communications Director, or designee, the name, title, and e-mail address of the person(s) designated as the Department's Social Media Administrator and their designee(s).
3. Department Directors shall work with their designated Social Media Administrator to develop a strategy for using social media to enhance the respective department's mission and goals and align them with the County's.
4. Department Directors shall develop controls to ensure that only the department's designated social media administrator the Mayor's Communications Director, or designee, has administrative access to publish content on behalf of the department.

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

---

5. Department Directors or their designee shall immediately notify the Mayor's Communications Director via email in the event a designated Social Media Administrator has ended their tenure, and/or that a new social media administrator has been designated.
6. Department Directors shall ensure that official social media accounts' "handles" and "passwords" are maintained by the department upon employee transfer or separation from service. Official Department Social Media accounts are the property of Miami-Dade County and not the property of any County employee.

### G. REVOCATION:

All parts of previous orders, rules and regulations, operations memos and administrative orders in conflict with this policy and procedure are revoked. Departments may issue additional standard operating procedures expanding further on this policy.

### REVISION:

New Policy

### CONTACT(S): Department/Division

Office of the Mayor

Communications Department

### REFERENCE DOCUMENT(S):

[Social Media Branding Guide](#)

### Exhibit 1

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

---

### Social Media Video Post Guidelines

- *Clearly Define Your Objectives*  
It is important to have clearly defined objectives before beginning to develop your video. Do you want to highlight content, spark action, or encourage awareness of an issue? Clarify the objectives first and determine if a video is the ideal medium to help you meet larger communication goals.
- *Keep Your Video Content Simple, Short, and Engaging*
  - Use of jargon, technical information, or detailed charts and graphs should be avoided.
  - Simple, easy-to-follow “stories” work best, with a single message or call to action.
  - COM / Digital Media Services recommends video length be between 0:15 – 2:00.
  - Any text over video should be limited to 20% or less of the screen. Rules of typography apply to digital mediums. Text should complement image, not overpower or detract.
    - Use a non-decorative font. Stick with same font throughout.
    - Select font color that is complementary and contrasts the video so audience can easily read and discern the clean lines that shape the message.
- *Intellectual Property. Images, text, video, audio files (including music) used on government social media accounts must comply with copyright laws.*
  - Copyright Laws - <https://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ01.pdf>
  - Fair Use Factors to Consider:
    - the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
    - the nature of the copyrighted work;
    - the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.
  - Fair Use article - <https://www.brafton.com/blog/fair-use-guide-citations-avoiding-plagiarism-web>
- *Information Quality*  
Please ensure the video content is reliable, valid, and free from opinions and errors. Audio levels should be clear and easy to understand (not too low and not over modulated).
- *Closed Captioning*  
For ADA compliance, videos must be closed captioned if they include voice audio.
- *Branding*  
Videos should be branded using the County logo on lower right portion of the media.

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

---

- *Video Consent / Release*  
Please obtain and maintain video consent/release from all persons, especially minors, featured in video (excluding County employees). If you need a sample release form, contact COM / Digital Media Services.
- *Records Management / Archiving*  
Published videos and all recorded video must be archived and maintained according to Public Record retention laws.
- *Evaluate your video performance*  
Metrics include monitoring the number of times each video has been viewed, and reviewing or responding to viewer comments and questions.