

# State of Kansas Social Media Policy

August 10, 2015

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish standards for the use of social media for agencies of the State of Kansas and for employees of the Executive Branch of state government. The use of social media by State agencies and their employees for business purposes can facilitate information sharing and serve outreach and communication goals. Social networking can improve interactivity between State agencies and the public, and reach populations that favor social media over traditional media.

## 2. Definition

Social media is defined as internet sites where individuals and organizations may share information and/or engage in conversations with others in a public setting which include, but are not limited to, sites such as Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, podcasts and RSS.

## 3. Policy

### Official State Use

State of Kansas agencies that choose to enhance their communications strategies by utilizing social media in carrying out their functions/missions must do so in ways that maintain good order and discipline, network security, comply with public records retention legal requirements and ensure consistency with State and agency media standards. Agency public information officers and communications directors are charged with administering the use of social media by the State agencies in which they are employed.

Material that is inappropriate for public release shall not be posted nor shall personal opinions or editorial comment. Responses shall not be made to hate speech, non-sequiturs (i.e., sarcastic comments) or issues that do not deal with agency missions. Information should not be released via social media unless it has been verified as factual and been approved for release following agency protocol.

Information will be posted on each social media site regarding under what circumstances a post may be removed from the site as follows:

- (1) Comments not topically related to the site;
- (2) Profane or inappropriate language;
- (3) Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- (4) Solicitations of commerce;
- (5) Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;

- (6) Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public, public systems, the State of Kansas, its agencies, officers, employees or public officials;
- (7) Content that violates legal ownership interest of any party;
- (8) Content that holds the State of Kansas, its agencies, officers, employees, or public officials in false light; or
- (9) Information that violates operational security or is protected by law.

The above list shall not be deemed to be all-inclusive and the State of Kansas reserves the right to add additional criterion.

Updating or posting to State agency social media sites by employees as part of the employee's official duties must be done with the knowledge and approval of the employee's supervisor and with adherence to agency policies, codes of conduct, directives, rules, regulations and statutes.

Any social media account created for official use by the State of Kansas, its agencies, officers, employees, or public officials shall be the property of the State of Kansas, and not the intellectual or personal property of the officer, employee or public official who creates, administers or maintains said account. Any user identification and password information for social media accounts must be provided to the agency appointing authority upon the creation and/or modification of said information and passwords used for social media accounts must comply with State Information Technology Executive Council (ITEC) requirements to the extent they are enabled by the social media company in question.

#### **Use by Employees**

Employees may have personal social media sites, but these may not be represented as official State agency sites, and may not be used during work hours unless approved by the employee's supervisor and agency appointing authority. In all cases, employee use of social media during work hours shall not interfere with work duties.

All employees are personally responsible for the information they communicate online. Employees should ensure that their social media activities do not interfere or conflict with their job or commitments to the State of Kansas, the agency in which they are employed, or the customers of the agency. To the extent permissible by law, employees waive their right of privacy for any information stored or transmitted on State-owned or -leased equipment.

When an employee's non-work related social media activities include any information related to their employment with the State of Kansas or the specific agency in which the employee works, the employee must make it clear that the views expressed are the employee's alone and do not reflect the views of the State of Kansas or the agency in which the employee is employed, by stating, for example, *"The views expressed in this post are my own. They have not been reviewed or approved by (insert agency) or the State of Kansas."*

The application of this rule should not be construed to infringe on any person's rights of expression which are guaranteed by law, each case will be given careful review prior to having any personnel actions taken.

#### **4. Agency-Specific Policies**

Any State agency may enact an agency-specific social media policy with provisions more stringent than this statewide policy for law enforcement staff or because of specific public safety or security reasons. Any such agency-specific social media policy must be reviewed and approved by the Department of Administration and the Office of Information Technology Services prior to implementation.

Agencies wishing to implement such agency-specific policies should submit a draft of the policy to Kraig Knowlton, Director of the Office of Human Resources, Department of Administration, by email at [Kraig.Knowlton@da.ks.gov](mailto:Kraig.Knowlton@da.ks.gov).

#### **5. Contact**

For information or guidance regarding this policy please contact Phil Wittmer, Chief Information Technology Officer, Office of Information Technology Services, by email at [Phil.Wittmer@ks.gov](mailto:Phil.Wittmer@ks.gov) or by phone at 785-296-3463.