

RESOLUTION NO.

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT A SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY AND BEST PRACTICES

WHEREAS the Board of County Commissioners recognize the importance of communicating with the public to share time-sensitive information and to provide outreach to further the missions of our departments; and

WHEREAS social media has become a common and widely-used form of communication; and

WHEREAS it is the desire of the Board of County Commissioners to provide information to a wider audience through the use of social media; and

WHEREAS the Board of County Commissioners recognize the importance of establishing guidelines for the use of social media by County departments, divisions and offices.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, that the Skagit County Board of Commissioners adopt the attached social media policy and best practices, and, identifies the County's Communications Coordinator to manage the County's social media and make recommendations the Board as to any needed changes to the adopted policy.

PASSED this 17 day of January, 2017.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON

ABSENT

Ron Wesen, Chair

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt
Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Commissioner

Lisa Janicki
Lisa Janicki, Commissioner



Attest:

Amber Eves
Clerk of the Board

Approved as to form:

M. J. [Signature]
Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

[Signature]
Department Head

Skagit County social media policy & best practices

PURPOSE

Skagit County departments, divisions or offices may use existing and emerging social media tools to provide information to and interact with the public. Social media is defined as internet-based communication technology that is immediate, interactive and allows information to be shared across multiple platforms.

Skagit County supports and encourages the use of social media to further the goals of the County and the missions of its departments.

Skagit County has an overriding interest in what is spoken on its behalf through social media. This policy establishes guidelines for the use of social media by County departments, divisions or offices.

POLICY

1. Setup of any and all social media by Skagit County departments, divisions or participating offices must receive prior approval from the County's Communications Coordinator. It is the duty of the Communications Coordinator to work with departments, divisions and participating offices of elected officials to ensure accurate and timely information is posted. The Communications Coordinator will not post information related to a department or participating office without prior departmental or participating office approval.
2. Skagit County's website – www.skagitcounty.net – will remain the County's primary and predominant internet presence.
3. The best, most appropriate use of Skagit County social media tools falls into two categories:
 - a. As channels for disseminating time-sensitive information as quickly as possible (for example, emergency information)
 - b. As communications/outreach tools that increase Skagit County's ability to provide information to the widest possible audience.
4. Unless otherwise approved by the Communications Coordinator, content posted to official Skagit County social media sites will first be posted on the County website.
5. Whenever possible, content posted to official County social media sites should contain links directing users back to the County's official website for additional information, forms, documents, or online services necessary to conduct business with Skagit County.
6. County social media sites will use the approved County logo and the official name of the department, division or office.
7. Skagit County departments and participating offices will be responsible for the content and upkeep of information posted to County social media sites or the internet.
8. Employees engaged in social media on behalf of Skagit County departments, divisions or participating offices are encouraged to attend social media training provided by the County Communications Coordinator, or outside social media training or seminars as appropriate.
9. Social media platforms approved for use by County departments, divisions or offices include
 - a. Facebook
 - b. Twitter

- c. Others as they become approved and meet the requirements of the County.
10. Additional social media sites proposed for County use must be approved by the County Communications Coordinator prior to activation.
11. Official Skagit County social media sites must comply with the Skagit County Code and applicable County policies.
12. Official Skagit County social media sites are subject to State of Washington public records laws. Content related to County business shall be maintained in an accessible format by use of the County's social media archiving provider so that it can be produced in response to a request. Whenever possible, social media sites shall clearly indicate that any content posted or submitted for posting is subject to public disclosure. Users shall be notified that public disclosure requests be directed to the County's Public Records Officer.
13. Washington State law and Washington State records retention schedules apply to social media formats and social media content. The department/division maintaining a site shall preserve records required to be maintained pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule for the required retention period.
14. Skagit County social media sites shall include notification to site users/visitors that the following content will not be allowed on the site:
 - a. Comments not topically related to a particular social media thread.
 - b. Departments, divisions or participating offices are prohibited from using official Skagit County social media for the purpose of working for or against any ballot measure or specific legislation, or for or against the candidacy of any person for public office.
 - c. Profane language or content.
 - d. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination of any kind, or that targets protected classes.
 - e. Sexual content or links to sexual content.
 - f. Solicitations of commerce, endorsements or advertising on behalf of private enterprise.
 - g. Conduct or encouragement of violence or illegal activity.
 - h. Information that may compromise the safety and/or security of the public and/or public systems.
 - i. Content that violates copyright law or other legal ownership interest of any other party.
15. Skagit County reserves the right to restrict and/or remove any content posted to any County social media sites that it deems to be in violation of this Policy or other applicable law, rule, or regulation. Any content removed based on these restrictions will be retained, including the time and date of the posting and the identity of the poster (if available).
16. County employees and/or elected officials are prohibited from disclosing any information via social media posts that may be confidential or may otherwise compromise the County.
17. Approved social media sites must only be used to conduct official County business.
18. Official County social media should not be used to circumvent County communication policies or review processes, including but not limited to public notification requirements or public advertisement of meetings or information.
19. County employees and/or elected officials are discouraged from using personal equipment and/or personal accounts to post information to official County social media sites. County employees and/or elected officials are similarly discouraged from using personal equipment and/or personal accounts to post information regarding official County business on other social media sites. All social media site posts by County employees and/or elected officials regarding official County business are subject to

Washington State public disclosure laws, open meetings laws, and all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

20. This policy may be amended as necessary by resolution of the Skagit County Board of Commissioners, who authorize the County's Communications Coordinator to manage this social media policy and make recommendations to the Skagit County Board of County Commissioners as to any necessary changes to this policy.
21. This policy applies to all Skagit County departments, divisions, and employees. It is intended as professional guidance for Skagit County elected officials and their employees.

PUBLIC POLICY DISCLAIMER

The following information must be displayed to users on all social media sites.

- All content posted on Skagit County social media sites is considered public record, and may be subject to public disclosure.
- Content on Skagit County social media sites is continually updated and may not be free from error.
- Users cannot request public records through a Skagit County social media site; formal public records requests must be made by phone, in writing or in email to the Skagit County Public Records Officer: <http://skagitcounty.net/Departments/RecordsManagement/finding.htm>
- Social media sites are not a legal method of submitting formal public comment; members of the public who wish to submit comment on documents or plans open for public comment must do so through the appropriate channels.
- This County social media site serves as a limited public forum; all content published is subject to monitoring and/or removal if it violates the County's social media policy (insert link to policy here)

The full Social Media policy and public disclaimer will be posted on the Skagit County website, and must be made available to users of official County social media sites by hyperlink.

Disclaimer

Content on Skagit County social media sites is intended to supplement information published on the County website or in County documents. As such, content is continually updated and may not be free from error. Social media sites are also not a legal method of submitting formal public comment; members of the public who wish to submit comment on documents or plans open for public comment must do so through the appropriate channels.