



Lynn Peterson  
Secretary of Transportation

10/2/14

Date

## Social Media Use

### I. Introduction

#### A. Purpose

This Secretary's Executive Order instructs employees on the appropriate use of or participation in social networking according to this Executive Order, current laws, policies, rules, procedures, best practices, and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) management principles.

#### B. Background

Social media offers the opportunity to interact with the public and employees in new ways that facilitate transparency, interactivity, and collaboration. Social networking is an important and valuable means of conducting WSDOT's work in a manner that meets the needs and expectations of the public, our partners, the Legislature, the media, and others with whom we interact in the course of doing business.

#### C. Definitions

**Social Media** – Online services available over the Internet accessible by computer or mobile device that allow people to participate, network, collaborate, or share information electronically. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to: blogs, wikis, social and professional networks, video or photo sharing, and online comments to publications or submission of letters to the editor.

**Social Media Identity** – A specific user identity or account that has been registered on a third party social media site.

**Social Networking** – The interaction with external websites or services based on participant contribution to the content. Interaction typically involves posting or contributing content to the social media site.

**Professional Networking** – The interaction with external websites or services that is focused solely on interaction and relationships of a work-related nature. Uses may include participating in professional groups, searching for or getting resources, and/or enhancing your network of contacts.

**Participation** – The act of contributing or posting content, whether original or not, to a social media site. Examples of posting include, but are not limited to: posting a status update, tweet, video, or photo to a social media site.

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## II. Secretary's Executive Order

WSDOT employees may use social media and social networking for approved agency purposes only, including professional networking, but not including job seeking activities (except as defined below).

## III. Information to Carry Out This Secretary's Executive Order

Employees are responsible for reading and understanding agency social media best practices.

### A. Official, Work Related Use of Social Media

- Official use of social media is defined as social media use on an authorized account registered to WSDOT for official business purposes using WSDOT work time, equipment, or resources. Examples of this would be authorized tweeting on behalf of a WSDOT Twitter account, posting content to WSDOT's Flickr, blog, YouTube and Facebook accounts, and using a WSDOT email address to login to these social media services.
- Official use requires that social media is a recognized component of an employee's WSDOT job duties and they have permission from the Communications Director.
- An employee's work-related use of social media will be in compliance with WSDOT's relevant policies, including, but not limited to, the list of policies in Section V: References.

### B. Professional Use of Social Media at Work

- Professional use of social media is defined as social media use on a personal social media account for an authorized business purpose. Professional social media use may be conducted using WSDOT time, equipment, and resources, provided such authorized use does not otherwise disrupt WSDOT operations.
- An employee's professional use of social media is for approved business purposes, including professional networking, to support the agency's mission, provided WSDOT policies are followed. Employees shall not speak on behalf of the agency unless specifically authorized to do so by their supervisor.
- De minimis use of professional networking sites to search for jobs is allowed when an employee has been authorized by Human Resources and Safety (HR&S) and the employee has received an at-risk letter indicating that approval.
- Employees may be asked by WSDOT or the Governor's Office to participate in online forums. Employees participate and respond on their own behalf and their views do not necessarily represent that of WSDOT.
- If an employee uses a personal social networking account (e.g., LinkedIn) for approved business purposes during work hours or using state owned equipment, this could make the employee's content on that site subject to discovery in the event of litigation or a public disclosure request. If an employee chooses to use their personal social networking account for approved business purposes during work hours or using state owned equipment, the employee shall allow WSDOT to review that account in the event of a discovery or public disclosure request, collect those records WSDOT deems necessary to fulfill the requests, and

provide the records collected to other parties. Employee professional use will be in agreement with relevant portions of WSDOT policies and all relevant laws and regulations, including those identified in Section V: References.

### **C. Personal Use of Social Media**

- Personal use of social media is defined as social media use on an account registered to an individual and their personal (non-WSDOT) email address that is not for WSDOT business purposes.
- Personal use of social media shall not occur on WSDOT work time, equipment, or resources.
- Employees shall not speak on behalf of the agency unless specifically authorized to do so.
- Employees shall not sign up for personal social media accounts using a WSDOT email address.

### **D. Creating an Agency Social Media Account**

Creating social media accounts that officially represent the agency requires approval from a division head and the Assistant Secretary of Strategic, Enterprise and Employee Services. If a division or office would like to request a new social media tool, send an email to the Assistant Secretary of Strategic, Enterprise and Employee Services that includes: the name of the requestor, the office or program name, the social tool requested, reason(s) for the request, and a justification for why this tool should be added to our current social media tool set.

### **E. Annual Review of Social Media Content**

WSDOT's Headquarters Communications Office will review agency social media sites annually to evaluate the effectiveness of the social media outreach efforts. Reviews will consider whether or not the information:

- Supports and promotes the agency mission.
- Supports the state's standards of ethics in government.
- Achieves the desired results for the program.
- Protects the intellectual property rights of creators of content.
- Protects the personality rights of any person appearing in material posted by the agency.

### **F. Public Records**

WSDOT is responsible for capturing electronic copies of its public records made or received using social media, including those records made or received using third-party websites.

#### **IV. Contact for More Information**

For questions or concerns about this Secretary's Executive Order, contact the WSDOT Communications Office at 360-705-7075.

#### **V. References**

- RCW 42.52 *Ethics in Public Service*
- RCW 42.56 *Public Records Act*
- RCW 40.14 *Preservation and Destruction of Public Records*
- WAC 292-110-010 *Use of state resources*
- Secretary's Executive Order E 1004 *Ethics in Public Service*
- Secretary's Executive Order E 1014 *Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, Freedom from Discrimination, and Freedom from Sexual Harassment*
- Secretary's Executive Order E 1021 *Employee Use of Electronic Communication Systems*
- Secretary's Executive Order E 1023 *Public Disclosure*
- Secretary's Executive Order E 1037 *Electronic Information Management*
- WSDOT Social Media Best Practices

#### **VI. Review and Update Requirements**

When changes are necessary to update this document, inform the Assistant Secretary of Strategic, Enterprise and Employee Services. The Assistant Secretary reviews this document periodically and proposes updates to the Secretary of Transportation for approval.

#### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information**

Materials can be provided in alternate formats by emailing the WSDOT Diversity/ADA Compliance Team at [wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov) or by calling toll free, 855-362-4ADA (4232). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may make a request by calling the Washington State Relay at 711.

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